THE

PANOPLIST,

AND

MISSIONARY MAGAZINE UNITED.

No. 3. AUGUST, 1808. Vol. I.

BIOGRAPHY.

MEMOIR OF THE LATE REV. JOHN NEWTON,

Rector of St. Mary Woolnoth, &c. Lombard Street, London.

CONCLUDED FROM OUR LAST.

The strong desire which Mr. Newton entertained, after his conversion, to preach the gospel, never forsook him. It was not one of those transient fits of zeal which are common to young converts, and which frequently decline of themselves, or are lost in consequence of worldly pursuits or connexions. His desire to bring sinners to God, appears to have been constant and invincible, notwithstanding the difficulties which occurred. He was far, however, from acting precipitately in this important affair: he seems to have weighed it in his mind for several years, before he was determined on entering fully into the ministry, and relinquishing his situation at Liverpool.

His first public attempts to preach the word were made at Warwick. After the removal of the late Mr. Ryland from a dissenting church in that town, a separation took place; and several pious persons, who were Pædobaptists, assembled together for worship in a dwelling-house, previously to the erection of that chapel in which Mr. Rowley preached for some time, after him Mr. Moody, for about twenty years. Mr. Vennor,* a

* A circumstance relating to the family of this gentlemen is worth recording;—At a time when the Nonconformists were persecuted in Warwick, the grandfather of Mr. Vennor happened to be one of the constables of that town; and was obliged, by his office, with other constables, to break up a conventicle, and take the attendants into custody. This was upon a Sunday. They attended with their prisoners at the court-house, waiting for the magistrates' return from church; but, from what cause is uncertain, they did not come; and each constable agreed to take a prisprisoner with him to his house to dinner. Through the blessing of God on the conversation of that day, Mr. Vennor was brought to the knowledge of the truth, and became a dissenter himself, preferring the cause of the prosecuted to that of the persecutors;—and his grandson was the father of a new interest in the town, which became, (especially under the ministry of the late Mr. Moody) of very important service to the souls of men. Thus the only wise God, our Saviour, causes the wrath of man to praise him? Mr. Vennor not only built the meeting-house, but left a minister's house, and four hundred and sixty pounds to the place, so long as the gospel shall be preached therein, according to the doctrine held forth in the Assembly's Shorter Catechism.

leading person among those who formed this new interest, having received a very strong recommendation of Mr. Newton from Mr. Brewer, of Stepney, invited him to preach to them for six weeks on probation. He accordingly came (we believe, in the year 1759) with Mrs. Newton. During his stay here, he used to retire on Saturdays, and sometimes on other days, to the grove, in Lord Dormar's park, about two miles from Warwick, and to other sequestered spots, where he composed his sermons. Though he did not fix among this people, yet he always retained a peculiar affection for them; and he has been heard to say, long after he settled at Olney, that the very name of Warwick, would at any time make his heart leap for joy.* It was not the smallness of the congregation at that time, nor the narrow salary proposed to be raised, that prevented his settlement at Warwick; but he was undecided in his mind, whether to go into the established church, or to join the dissenters. Among the latter were his first religious connexions, which gave his mind a bias towards them; but he apprehended that disputes in dissenting congregations were common; and an occasional sermon by Mr. Beddome, which he heard at the Baptist meeting at Warwick, had a considerable effect on his mind to increase his disinclination to become a dissenting minister. Indeed, at that period, his ministerial talents were not very popular; and it does not seem that he was much pressed to settle with any dissenting church.

It was about this time that, being at Leeds, he was desired by the late Rev. Mr. Edwards to preach for him at Whitechapel. He met a party of religious friends at Mr. Edwards' house, which adjoined the chapel; and took his tea (of which he was remarkably fond) with them. When the hour of preaching approached, Mr. E. intimated to him, that if he was disposed to retire from the service (as was *then* customary with most serious ministers) a room was at his service; but Mr. Newton declined this, saying, he was so well pleased with his company, that he was unwilling to leave it; and added, "I am prepared." At the appointed time the service commenced; and after prayer, Mr. Newton read his text, which was, "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved." Mr. Newton began fluently; but in a few minutes he

* Many years after his visit to Warwick, he thus expresses his affection:—'In returning from Shropshire, we spent two nights at Warwick: the first time I have been there since my proposed settlement was over-ruled. There, likewise, we joyed and sorrowed: the people amongst whom my mouth was first opened, and where I met some sweet encouragement on my entrance into the ministry, will always be dear to me: they are at present but few,—but those few are lively and steady.' *Letters to C. Clunie, p.* 164. Writing to Mr. Vennor, July 19, 1782, he says. "How many mercies has the Lord bestowed upon me since my first visit to Warwick, which is now more than 22 years! I often think of that time with pleasure. There the Lord opened my mouth. Many retired places in your neighbourhood were endeared to me, by seasons which I can still remember, when I was enabled to seek the Lord, and to pour out before him prayers, which he has since abundantly answered."

lost all recollection of his plan; was confused, stopped, and desired Mr. Edwards to come up and finish the service. Mr. E. urged him to proceed; but Mr. N. left the pulpit; which Mr. E. ascended, and concluded with an address to the audience, on the importance of the Spirit's agency to help out infirmities. Such was the confusion occasioned by this failure of the young preacher, that when walking in the streets after it, he fancied, if he saw two or three people talking together, that it was the subject of their discourse. Mortifying, however, as this circumstance was, he learnt by it, no doubt, to put his trust, not in his preparation, nor in his memory, but in the Lord alone.*

After this, Mr. Newton continued to reside at Liverpool; and retained his office of tide-surveyor. He could not, however, be silent. He used to preach in his own house on Lord's Day evenings. The room was small; yet those who could obtain admission were well pleased and greatly refreshed: some of them are still alive, and mention these seasons with gratitude and joy; for "he helped them much who had believed through grace." Mr. Zachary Barnes, an old disciple, many years a deacon of the late Mr. Medley's church, is one of this number; and relates the following anecdote:—On a Lord's Day morning, walking with him to Crosby, a village about six miles from Liverpool, to hear a gospel minister, Mr. Newton took with him a volume of Saurin's Sermons, in French; which he translated and repeated to his friend in English, as they went together to the house of God; and which Mr. Barnes found exceedingly profitable to him. Indeed he seldom walked in the fields about Liverpool without a book; whereby he acquired much useful knowledge, and by which his conversation was rendered remarkably edifying.

It was not till the 29th of April, 1764, that Mr. Newton obtained episcopal ordination.† For a considerable time he halted between two opinions; but at last determined on the side of the Establishment. It may be best to state this affair in his own words:—"My first overtures were to the dissenters; and had not the providence of God remarkably interposed to prevent it, I should probably have been a brother with you (a dissenting minister, to whom his Four Letters, entitled "Apologia,"‡ are addressed) in every sense: but my designs were over-ruled. A variety of doors by which I sought entrance (for I did not give up upon the first disappointment) were successively shut against me. These repeated de-

* See some admirable thoughts 'On the Snares and Difficulties attending the Ministry of the Gospel.' —*Omicron's Letters*, V.

† After repeated conversations with the Bishop of Lincoln, in which Mr. Newton avowed his sentiments, his lordship declared himself satisfied; and promised to ordain him. The service was performed at Buckden. This was six years after his application to the Archbishop of York, which did not succeed. *Letters to Mrs. N. p.* 91.—He received deacon's orders April 29; and priest's orders the 15th or 16th of June following.

‡ This book gave considerable offence to some of his dissenting brethren; and was answered by Dr. Mayo in a volume entitled, "An Apology and a Shield."

lays afforded me more time to think and judge for myself; and the more I considered the point, the more my scruples against conformity gave way. Reasons increased upon me, which not only satisfied me that I might conform without sin, but that the preference (as to my own concern) was plainly on that side. Accordingly, in the Lord's due time, after several years waiting to know his will, I sought and obtained episcopal ordination."—"Far from having regretted this interesting part of my conduct for a single hour, I have been more satisfied with it from year to year."*

In a letter to Mrs. Newton, dated Liverpool, June 14, 1762, two years before his ordination, he thus expresses his desire to enlarge his attempts in the way of preaching, or expounding, in that town. "The wish of many here, the advice of many absent, and my own judgment (I had almost said my conscience) are united on one side; which I think would preponderate against Mr. B——'s single sentiment, if *your* fears did not add weight to his scale." He adds, "The death of the late Mr. Jones, of St. Saviour's, has pressed this concern more closely upon my mind. I fear it must be wrong, after having so solemnly devoted myself to the Lord's service, to wear away my time, and bury my talents in silence (because I have been refused orders in the church) after all the great things he has done for me." He then mentions and answers the objections which occurred to him against his plan; and begs Mrs. Newton to think over what he had urged, and pray for direction: and concludes by saying, "Perhaps, before long, it may seem to deserve *your* approbation. To hear *you* say so, would make me quite another person; for while I remain in this suspense, I feel, at times, a burden which I can hardly bear, and cannot possibly shake off." †

By this passage, it appears that Mr. Newton had nearly made up his mind to preach as a dissenter; but Mrs. Newton viewed the matter in a different light; and her interposition at this crisis, had a powerful influence on his determination. This is avowed by Mr. Newton, in a note at the bottom of the page just referred to:—"The influence of my judicious and affectionate counsellor, moderated the zeal which dictated the preceding letter, and kept me quiet till the Lord's time came, when I should have the desire of my heart!"—"I believe no arguments, but hers, could have restrained me for almost two years, from taking a rash step; of which I should perhaps have soon repented, and which would have led me far wide of the honor and comfort I have since been favored with."

It was by the procurement of the late Lord Dartmouth ‡ that Mr. Newton settled at Olney, in Buckinghamshire. The Rev. Moses Brown (author of Sunday Thoughts) had long been vicar of that place; and, on his removal to Morden College, Black-

* Apologia, p. 49, 50.

† Letters to a Wife, vol. ii. p. 82.

‡ Several admirable letters from Mr. Newton to this pious nobleman, appear in the beginning of the first volume of his Cardiphonia.

heath, in the vicinity of Lord Dartmouth's seat, Mr. Newton obtained the curacy. His first sermon at the church was in May 1764, from Psalm lxxx. 1, "Give ear, O Shepherd of Israel!" &c.*

In this place he found a considerable number of serious persons who had been awakened under the ministry of Mr. Brown. Speaking of his new situation, in a letter to Captain Clunie, he says, "The Lord has brought me to a place where I am persuaded he has many dear children; where the light of the gospel is highly prized; so that they would almost do and suffer any thing rather than be deprived of it; they flock from four to six (or more) miles about the country, to hear the word. I have been hitherto favored with much liberty in my own soul,—am heard with acceptance, and have reason to hope that my poor endeavors have been already, in some measure blessed."

Mr Newton had relinquished a handsome income at Liverpool, for a poor pittance at Olney. A few months after he came to the latter place, he writes thus to his friend: "My settlement now, including the people's subscription and the house, may be near or about £60." This is sufficient to shew that Mr. Newton was not actuated by mercenary motives when he entered into the christian ministry.

About this time he published a Narrative of the former part of his Life, in Letters to Dr. Haweis. This procured a small addition to his income, and excited a greater attention to his ministry. "The people," says he, "stare at me since reading it—and well they may. I am indeed a wonder to many,—a wonder to myself; especially I wonder that I wonder no more."

He soon set up a lecture on Thursday evenings; which was well attended. He also took a large room in the town for the purpose of catechizing and instructing the children of his parish; these meetings were held on Thursdays, after dinner; and many of the catechumens attended the evening-lecture. Their number amounted in a few months to two hundred.

He also established a prayer-meeting on Tuesday evenings, in a large house. "It is a noble place," says he, "with a parlour behind it; and holds one hundred and thirty people conveniently." Here he went through the Pilgrim's Progress, in a way of exposition. His judicious remarks on the first part of this excellent book, have been repeatedly published.

In the following summer, the congregation having increased, a large gallery was erected in the church, capable of accommodating a considerable number of additional hearers.

At another time he thus writes: "We have set up a new meeting on Friday evenings; in which my sheep and lambs are to be divided into small flocks of ten or twelve at a time, for conversation. Pray for us that we may be healthy and thriving, and that

* Immediately before his leaving Liverpool, he preached six times in different churches in that town and neighbourhood, to many thousands, with a considerable degree of acceptance, and, it is hoped, of usefulness.

the wolf may be kept from the fold."*

Mr. Newton's intimate friendship with Mr. Cowper, the celebrated poet, contributed not a little to his comfort during several years of his residence at Olney.† Their houses were at some distance from each other, on account of a long winding in the town: but, so near behind, that only a small close separated their gardens. This field belonged to a friendly neighbor, who, for a small acknowledgment, indulged them with the privilege of passing across it: and, to render it more convenient, Mr. Newton had a door opening out of the garden into the close. The religious public have derived no small advantage from their friend-

* Mr. Newton enjoyed, in his retired situation, the visits of many valuable friends, who thought it their privilege to spend a few days in his family. Several clergyman also visited him occasionally, and preached in his pulpit. Among these, he mentions in his letters, Mr. B—ge, Mr. T—d, Mr. V——, Mr. M—n.

† The talents, the habits, and the inclinations of Mr. Newton, fitted him for a stated residence, as a parochial minister. Others, probably, are equally adapted, as well as called to itinerant labours; but Mr. N. in a letter to the Rev. Mr. C——(Card. vol. ii. p. 291) seems, we conceive, to depreciate too much the endeavours of those who travel about to preach the gospel. "I wish," says he, "there were more itinerant preachers. If a man has grace and zeal, and but little fund, let him go and diffuse the substance of a dozen sermons over as many counties; but you have natural and acquired abilities," &c. And again (p. 245): "I wish well to irregulars and itinerants, who love and preach the gospel. I am content that they should labor that way, who have not talents nor fund to support the character of a parochial minister; but, I think, you are qualified for more important service."

With due submission to the judgment of this excellent man, and a proper acknowledgement of his candour in wishing well to itinerant preachers, we hope we may, without offence, make a remark or two on this advice.

We conceive that Mr. Newton thinks too meanly of those laborious servants of Christ who, with poor fare, hard lodging, and fatiguing travelling, in heat, cold or rain, preach, perhaps, eight or ten times a week, bear the brunt of violent opposition and cruel mockings; and continue in this arduous employment for many years. It requires much self-denial and devotedness to God to support all this. Tolerable talents, and a fund of a little more than a "dozen sermons," is necessary to maintain their usefulness and reputation. Many a minister, who lives at ease in a commodious house, keeps a comfortable table, lies in a soft bed, sits most of his time in a well furnished library, and visits occasionally the tables of the rich, endures next to nothing, compared with these apostolical labourers. The usefulness of honest itinerants is often great indeed! Many have reason to bless God for their plain and faithful labours. They gain access to remote villages, hamlets, commons, collieries, and other places, which parochial, or regular dissenting ministers, never heard of; and congregations are formed, among whom the faith and practice of the gospel are maintained, and the benefit extended to future generations. Not to say, that some of our most useful ministers first began their career in this way, and were formed in it, as in an excellent school, for their present respectable stations. While, therefore, we rejoice in the steady and regular labours of resident ministers, we should be sorry if the weight of such a name as Mr. Newton's should operate against the zealous exertions of that very useful set of men, itinerant preachers; or deter those who love souls from entering on that employment, and using their utmost efforts to pluck perishing sinners as brands from the fire.

ly intercourse; for it gave occasion to the composition of "Olney Hymns," which were intended both for the edification of sincere christians, and as a monument to perpetuate so endeared a friendship. Mr. Cowper's Hymns are marked with the letter C.; but a long and affecting indisposition, with which Mr. Cowper was visited, prevented his intended contribution towards this work:—a loss which cannot be sufficiently lamented.*

The knowledge which Mr. Newton had of the dissenters, secured to them his candid and amicable regards. In Olney there are two dissenting congregations. The members of these societies highly respect the memory of Mr. Newton. He knew how to treat with christian friendship those who, out of a regard to conscience, separated from the communion of the Church of England. His prudence toward men, and his piety towards God, appeared in acting upon such principles of delicacy and honor, as will ever be ornamental in the conduct of different societies towards each other; will render their mutual intercourse pleasant and profitable, while it will reflect honour on the persons themselves and the religion they profess.* His intimate friendship with Mr. Bull and Mr. Greathead, of Newport Pagnell, Mr. Ryland, of Northampton, and other dissenting ministers, appears in an amiable light from his letters in Cardiphonia, and from his conduct after he removed to London. Probably, the church does not contain a clergyman of superior liberality towards dissenters. This will perhaps be accounted a reproach to his memory by those who, in their late writings, represent all christian affection to the *Sectaries* as criminal, and derogatory to the dignity of the established church;—but, if we form our estimate of the christian temper from the example of Christ and his immediate followers; and, if we look forward to the day in which the love of his disciples to each other will be particularly noticed by our common Lord, we shall rejoice in every proof of ministerial candor, such as Mr. Newton so uniformly displayed.

In this his rural station, Mr. Newton continued fifteen years. He appears to have been contented and useful in it; and, though he occasionally visited the metropolis, where his labours excited considerable attention,—yet, if we may judge from his printed letters, he entertained neither an expectation nor a wish to remove. Some of his letters in Cardiphonia express, in very

* Mr. Cowper was a man of learning and taste. His translation of Homer is highly esteemed. What might not have been expected had he given us a poetical VERSION of the Psalms? Dr. Watts's is expressly an IMITATION of them; but, had Cowper employed his brilliant talents in a versified translation, how great might have been the blessings to the church? When will such a poet appear to perform the desirable task?

† "On Tuesday evening we attended in a body to hear Mr. G——n, of R——l. I was willing to do every thing in my power to remove his prejudices (if he has any) against us; and the greatest compliment I can pay any one is, to suspend our meeting when it interferes with their preaching."

Letters to Cp. Clunie, p. 124.

strong terms, his ideas of the danger to which the professors of the gospel in London are exposed, and the advantages which christians in the country possess above them, in some respects. His distinction between "London grace and Country grace" is well known. He expresses also, in his letters to the Rev. Mr. ——, his disapprobation of a minister's removal, except in cases wherein the Lord's will is very clearly pointed out; but we doubt not that Mr. Newton, whose regard to the indications of Providence was peculiarly great, would never have left Olney, had he not been fully satisfied of the propriety of that measure. Indeed, the sphere of his usefulness was thereby very much enlarged; so that not only the inhabitants of London, who chose to avail themselves of his ministerial labors, had an opportunity of being edified by them, but also great numbers of persons from all parts of England, Scotland, &c. who occasionally visited the metropolis on their various affairs.

It was by the active benevolence of that truly excellent and benevolent gentleman, the late John Thornton, Esq. that Mr. Newton was introduced to the Rectory of the United Parishes of St. Mary Woolnoth, and St. Mary Woolchurch Haw, in Lombard Street. To that gentleman he had been indebted for many previous favors; and he never suffered an opportunity to escape of expressing his obligations in the strongest manner. No man could be more grateful for any benefit conferred upon him than Mr. Newton. It was a distinguishing *trait* of his character, that he retained the most lively impressions of kindness offered to him, for many years after.

He was equally intent on procuring favors for others. An intimate friend of his assures us, that many who are acquainted with his public character, are strangers to that disinterested, minute, and persevering attention to the infirmities or wants of his friends, his readiness to use his influence (which was not small) with the rich and the great to serve others; and, in this way, he was the instrument of a great deal of good.

Mr. Newton entered on his public work in St. Mary's church, on Lord's Day, December 19, 1779. His first discourse was intended to convey to his parishioners an idea of the doctrines he designed to preach among them, and the spirit in which he intended to impart them; for which his text was very appropriate: 'Speaking the truth in love.' This sermon was printed: and the inhabitants had an immediate opportunity of knowing the views of their new Rector.

Here Mr. Newton continued to labour for many years, preaching every Lord's Day, morning and evening; the afternoon being supplied by a lecturer chosen by the parish. The Rev. Josiah Pratt has for some years filled this office; and a little time before Mr. Newton's death, the lecture was changed from the afternoon to the evening, and so continues. Mr. Newton also established a Lecture on Wednesday mornings, which was numerously attended; and on these occasions many dissenters (and frequently dissenting ministers) formed a part of the congregation. It is almost unnecessary to say, that his labours

were strictly evangelical, judicious, affectionate, and highly edifying.

Mr. Newton was generally favored with a great share of bodily health; so that he was very rarely prevented from the regular discharge of his official duties: but he was not without his trials,—the heaviest of which was the illness and decease of Mrs. Newton; to whom, it is well known, his attachment was very uncommon. Before their removal from Liverpool, she had received a blow on her left breast, which occasioned some pain and anxiety for a short time, but which soon wore off. A small tumor, however remained; but she never complained of it. In the month of October, 1788, she took the advice of a surgeon, who found the malady so far advanced, that he judged the extraction of the tumor would be attended with the most imminent danger. With the greatest composure, she informed Mr. Newton of her state. His sensations were indescribable; yet he felt it his duty to submit with silence to the affecting stroke. As the following spring advanced, her disorder rapidly increased; and her pains were almost incessant. In a few months after, her appetite failed; and she was entirely confined to the house. At length it was evident that death was at hand. Such was her weakness that she could scarcely bear the sound of the gentlest foot on the carpet, or of the softest voice. On Sunday, December 12, when Mr. Newton was preparing for church in the morning, she sent for him and took her final farewell. "She faintly uttered an endearing compellation," says Mr. Newton, "and gave me her hand, while I prayed by her bed-side. We exchanged a few tears; but I was almost as unable to speak as she was: but I returned soon after, and said, "If your mind, as I trust, is in a state of peace it will be a comfort to me, if you can signify it by holding up your hand. She held it up, and waved it to and fro several times." That evening her speech and sight failed; but she continued composed, till on Wednesday night (December 15, 1790) about ten o'clock, she breathed her last.*

Mr. Newton who anxiously watched her expiring moments, took off her ring, according to her repeated injunction, and put it on his own finger; and then kneeled down with the servants, and returned the Lord his unfeigned thanks for her deliverance and peaceful dismission. Persuaded that, immediately on her departure from the body, she was admitted to join the heavenly choir, he found his own mind relieved from a weight of painful feelings and anxieties, under which nothing but the divine power had long supported him. Many of his intimate friends dreaded this

* For several years after Mrs. Newton's death Mr. N. used to vent his grief and affection in verses, on its anniversary; which he published in a small tract, entitled "Ebenezer;" and some of the verses are very beautiful.

"Forget her! No; can four short years
The deep impression wear away?
She still before my mind appears,
Abroad, at home, by night, by day!
Oft as with those she lov'd I meet,
Her looks, her voice her words recur;
Or if alone I walk the street,
Still something leads my thoughts to her!"

The subsequent verses give the subject a happy turn; and are equally evangelical and poetic.

mournful event, and feared that it would overwhelm him; but he found it far otherwise. His "heart trusted in the Lord, and he was helped,"—so wonderfully helped, that the solemn separation did not prevent his preaching a single sermon! Indeed, he preached in the morning of the day on which she died; and thrice while she lay dead in the house. After she was deposited in the vault, he delivered her funeral-sermon, with little more emotion than if it had been for another person.

The general course of Mr. Newton's ministry, after his settlement in London, is so well described by himself, in a letter to the late Rev. Dr. Robbins, of Plymouth, in America, dated April 19, 1794, that we prefer it to any account of our own.

"We have a full church at St. Mary Woolnoth, and a very serious congregation. Few of the hearers, however, comparatively, are my parishioners. They find the way from all parts of London and its environs. By preaching the truths of the gospel rather in an experimental than controversial way, I seem to please and suit them as well as if they were all of a mind. The chief points that I aim at in preaching are,

"First, To set forth the glory and grace of God in the person of the Saviour:—Second, To shew the danger and folly of a form of godliness without the power, of a mere talking speculative profession:—Third, To persuade if possible, those that love the Lord Jesus Christ to love one another, to lay much stress upon the things in which we are agreed, and but little upon those in which we differ.

"Through mercy, we walk in peace; and we have more than a few among us who, I think, are first-rate christians; and who perhaps would have been deemed such, had they lived in the time of the apostles.

"It is true, Sir, as you observe, that I am a wonder to many, I wish I was more a wonder to myself; but I hope I have some sense how unworthy I was, and am, of the mercy I obtained. The Lord literally brought me out of the land of Egypt and the house of bondage. I was not only a daring, blaspheming infidel, and a licentious hardened profligate, but my situation on the coast of Africa was such, that my recovery from thence to be within the reach of ordinary means, seemed morally impossible.* I sometimes consider myself as a *unique* in the annals of the church. The grace of God, which is exceedingly abundant, may have pardoned and reclaimed some, who have gone equal lengths in wickedness (though I have reason to think few of my years and opportunities ever went beyond me in my dreadful career;) but the manner of my deliverance from Africa, not only undeserved but undesired, and the subsequent path into which the Lord was

* Mr. Newton was in a habit of receiving his religious friends at an early breakfast; when many used to be gratified by his pious and instructive conversation, and esteemed it a privilege to unite with him in family devotions. On one of those happy occasions, the writer of this note introduced to him a young minister from the country, who had expressed a desire to see him. "Ah!" said Mr. N. "I was a wild beast once, on the coast of Africa, and the Lord *tamed* me; and there are many people now who have a curiosity to see me."

pleased to lead me, seem peculiar to myself.

"When I thought of the ministry, I met with many difficulties and discouragements before I was admitted, that I at length gave up all application. I hoped that the Lord graciously accepted the desire, which he himself had put into my heart, as he did David's purpose of building the temple: but in his case it was added, "Thou shalt not build me a house, because thou hast been a man of blood." So I apprehended, that although I meant well, and the Lord was not displeased with me for desiring to serve him in the gospel, it was an honor that could not be permitted to one, who had been so openly vile and scandalous as I. Yet in his best time, after six years waiting, and when I had given up the expectation, I obtained my desire with the greatest ease. When Olney, the first place allotted to my service, was ready, the door of entrance was set wide open. There I found a poor and afflicted, but simple and gracious few, who were appointed to teach me, while I endeavored to instruct them. Olney was a good school; and though I was a dull scholar, yet I trust I learnt something in the sixteen years I was there; which contributed, in some measure, to qualify me for my more public station in London. I have been here fourteen years; and goodness and mercy have followed and accompanied me every day. I have been favored with much acceptance, and with some usefulness; I have many friends, and am surrounded with comforts."

Mr. Newton's sentiments, as to doctrine, were avowedly Calvinistic; but he did not make the particular points generally distinguished by that term the prominent objects of his preaching, though they were always implied in his discourse. He used, in familiar conversation, to say, that "he wished his Calvinism to be found in his sermons, as sugar in a cup of tea, which sweetens it all, and is no where to be found in a lump!"

About two years before Mr. Newton's disease, his strength began sensibly, but gradually to decline. He became very feeble, and scarcely able to ascend the pulpit. A man-servant used to stand behind him while he preached. His recollection was observed to fail; and it was with difficulty he continued those public services, which love to his Master and his people made him unable to relinquish. At length it was painfully evident to his friends that he could no longer appear as a public instructor. His ministerial work was finished; and he appeared no more in the pulpit after October, 1806, a little more than a year before his death. His last public sermon was preached for the benefit of the sufferers from the battle of Trafalgar, when his faculties were so far gone, that he was obliged to be reminded of the object of his discourse. When he could no longer preach, he usually sat in the pulpit to hear his curate, as deafness accompanied the other infirmities of age. The last time he attempted to speak in his church, was in the reading-desk, just before the death of his curate the Rev. Mr. Gunn; which happened December 5, 1806.

He continued for about eleven months confined to his room,

calmly looking for his expected dismission, of which he would sometimes speak with his usual pleasantry. "I am," said he, "like a person going a journey in a stage-coach, who expects its arrival every hour, and is frequently looking out at the window for it;" and, at another time, to the enquiry how he was, he replied, "I am packed and sealed, and waiting for the post." His mind was generally tranquil; though, at times, during his illness, his spirits were low, and his religious comforts suffered some degree of interruption; but "he knew in whom he had believed;" and when speaking to a friend, on the subject of believers' doubts and fears, he observed, that he could not give place to fear, and believed he never should while these words were in the Bible:—"Him that cometh unto me I will in nowise cast out."

To a pious minister, who expressed some doubts of his own conversion, Mr. Newton once said, "Whatever I may doubt on other points, I cannot doubt whether there has been a certain gracious transaction between God and *my* soul. I cannot doubt whenever I look at my former and my present objects, whether I ought not to cry, "What hath God wrought!"

"Mr. Newton," says Mr. Cecil, in his funeral sermon for him, "gradually sunk as the setting sun, shedding to the last those declining rays which gilded and gladdened the dark valley. In the latter conversations I had with him, he expressed an unshaken faith in eternal realities; and when he could scarcely utter words, he remained a firm witness to the truths he had preached."

To a clergyman, who visited him in his confinement, he said, "The Lord has a sovereign right to do what he pleases with his own. I trust we are his, in the best sense, by purchase, by conquest, and by our willing consent. As sinners, we have *no right*, and if believing sinners, we have *no reason* to complain; for all our concerns are in the hand and care of our best Friend, who has promised that all things shall work together for his glory and our final benefit. My trial is great; but I am supported, and have many causes for daily praise."

In the circumstances of extreme debility and occasional suffering which attended Mr. Newton for many months, his dearest friends could not wish for the longer protraction of his life. His dismission from a body, now became so unfit a tabernacle for his active spirit, was rather to be desired; and this was graciously afforded on the evening of Monday, December 21, 1807, in his eighty-third year. The eyes of Faith pursue the departed saint to the regions of unclouded happiness, and behold him admitted in the presence of his much-loved and gracious Master, whose plaudit he has doubtless received, and whose mediatorial glory he beholds with unveiled face.

On Thursday, December 31, the remains of this venerable man were conveyed to the repository of the dead, in the vault beneath the church in which he had, for about twenty-eight years, proclaimed the word of life.—His strong aversion to a pompous funeral induced him to leave a written direction, that only one mourning coach should accom-

pany his hearse. This injunction was complied with; but many gentlemen provided their own or other coaches, and fell in with the procession in its way from Coleman Street* to the church. The Rev. Mr. Foster read the funeral service; at which about thirty ministers were present. On the following Sabbath, January 3, the Rev. Mr. Cecil preached the funeral discourse at St. Mary's, from Luke xii. 42, 43, "And the Lord said, Who, then is that faithful and wise steward whom his Lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant whom his Lord when he cometh," &c. Many other ministers, among the dissenters, as well as of the established church, testified their respect for Mr. Newton, by funeral discourses at their several places of worship.

Although a variety of excellencies, which adorn the subject of this memoir, have been noticed in the preceding narrative, it may be desirable to examine a little more minutely the admirable character which he sustained. If his mental talents were not of the first order, for strength and splendor, yet he possessed a soundness of understanding, which was not merely the result of observation, but evidenced powers superior to the ordinary level. So much was his judgment respected, that many sought his advice on affairs of a secular nature, as well as those immediately connected with his functions as a minister of the gospel.* If his genius was not brilliant, it was far from dull; and that he had a happy talent at invention, appears in his works and particularly in his Epistolary Correspondence: a branch of writing in which he peculiarly excelled. The firmness of his mind appeared in the steadiness of his character. It was not the phlegmatic perseverance of stupidity, which some weak and lukewarm persons discover, who like a mill-horse, continue in their undeviating round of duty, but it was the effect of a mind, at once able to perceive the eternal differences between right and wrong, and fortified with those principles, which an experimental knowledge of divine truth alone can furnish.

The name of Newton is sweetly embalmed in the recollection of various persons belonging to different denominations of chris-

* Mr. Newton resided for some years after his coming to London, in Charles' Square, Hoxton; and afterwards in Coleman Street Buildings.

* Mr. Newton had a very happy talent of administering admonition and reproof. Hearing that a person in whose welfare he was greatly interested, had met with peculiar success in business, and was deeply immersed in worldly engagements, the first time he called on him, which was usually once a month, he took him by the hand and drawing him on one side into the counting-house, told him his apprehensions for his spiritual welfare. His friend, without making any reply, called down his partner in life, who came with her eyes suffused in tears, and unable to speak. Enquiring the cause, he was told, she had just been sent for to one of her children, that was out at nurse, and supposed to be in dying circumstances. Clasping her hands immediately in his, he cried, "God be thanked he has not forsaken you! I do not wish your babe to suffer; but I am happy to find he gives you this token of his favor."

tians. His candor was exercised in its proper sphere; and indulged there to a very wide extent. Provided his friends and connexions (to use his own expression) "held the HEAD, and acted under his direction and influence," he esteemed them irrespective of the sect to which they were attached; and was ever ready to give them proofs of affectionate regard. Bigotry seemed alike distant from his natural temper and from his religious habits; for, with an apostolic benevolence, he loved all those, who themselves "loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity." It must be acknowledged that his amiable disposition, improved and expanded by the mild spirit of the gospel, but mingled with the weakness incident to man, sometimes subjected him to the impositions of specious and designing men, and made him too credulous of their professions. But even this was an imperfection which, whenever he detected, he was prompt to amend; and must surely meet with a censure far less severe than that defect which originates in harshness of temper and the moroseness of sectarianism.

Those who are engaged in the management of families, know that much of domestic comfort depends on the orderly arrangement of home economy. Ministers especially, ought to consider, that they not only best secure this kind of happiness by an attention to order, but that, in "ruling well their own houses," they give a presumptive proof at least, that they can "rule in the church of God." Mr. Newton, indeed, had not a number of children, during whose infancy, early childhood, and frequent interruptions of health, some slight violations of family regularity must be occasioned; but his household generally consisted of five or six persons. None of them, however, were permitted to break in upon his regular hours for meals, and particularly for the devotions of the family. It was his frequent declaration, that "to be at home early in the evening, and to be strict in observing the stated periods of closet and family worship, were among the best means of forming good masters and mistresses, good children and servants.

As a companion, Mr. Newton was remarkable for his cheerfulness and pleasantry. The former habits of his life enabled him to enrich his parlour discourse with that variety of detail, which always gives a zest to conversation; and, being of a facetious temper, he enlivened his friends by point and sprightliness of remark, which produce a lawful mirth, that "doeth good like a medicine:" yet nothing was more abhorrent to the purity of his mind, than a levity sporting with sacred things, or exciting a laugh at the vices and infirmities of mankind.

The liberality of Mr. Newton to the poor, was also a conspicuous trait in his character. Though he never was rich, yet he spared, out of a moderate competency, more than many would deem consistent with the rules of prudence. His hospitality to his numerous visitors is well known; but the streams of his beneficence flowed rather in a subterraneous channel, than in a noisy current on the surface of society; and the many acts of kindness, which gladdened the

hearts of the indigent and afflicted, will remain unknown until He, who is "not unrighteous to forget the work of faith and labor of love," shall say to his people, "Inasmuch as ye did it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me."

Whatever social and moral virtues decorated Mr. Newton's character, it would be a serious omission not to observe, that his unfeigned and fervent piety gave a polish to every other excellence. Deep was the veneration which he felt for the word of God; and sedulously did he cultivate an experimental acquaintance with its hallowed contents. The writer of these lines will never forget the fervor of his devotion in prayer, nor the heavenly spirit which he discovered in acts of worship. His conscience was exquisitely tender; and, like a fine enamel, would not bear without injury the slightest collisions of sin. In the varied walks of life, he exemplified the consistency of the christian; so that even his enemies could not bring any criminal charge against his practice. He was serious without dulness, devout without enthusiasm, zealous without bigotry, and in a word, "holy in all manner of conversation and godliness."

The praise of our venerable friend, as an author, is in all the churches. Most of his works, which have already been noticed, will long continue to "edify the body of Christ." The ease and simplicity of his style,* and the warmth of affection which breathes in his published letters to his correspondents, can never fail to afford a rich repast to all, who can relish the familiar pleasures, and prize the delicate fidelity of christian friendship.

In the pulpit, his whole soul appeared to flow out in ardent concern for their spiritual welfare, so that all might perceive his principal design was to "win souls to Jesus Christ." Nor was his labor in vain. There are many living witnesses to the success of his ministrations, in persons who "were once darkness, but are become light in the Lord;" and, it cannot be doubted, but he has lately joined a numerous band of disembodied and perfected spirits within the

* The following character of Mr. Newton's writings, from the incomparable pen of Cowper, will weigh with the public far more than any thing we can offer:—Speaking of his Ecclesiastical History, Mr. C. says, "The facts [are] incontestible,—the grand observations upon them all irrefragable,—and the style, in my judgment, incomparably better than that of Robertson or Gibbon. I would give you my reasons for thinking so, if I had not a very urgent one for declining it." Hayley's Cowper, vol. ii. p. 91.

In another letter, however he thus explains himself: "That you may not suspect me of having said more than my real opinion will warrant, I will tell you why. In your style, I see no affectation: in every line of theirs, nothing else. They disgust me always: Robertson with his pomp and his strut, and Gibbon with his finical and French manners. You are as correct as they. You express yourself with as much precision. Your words are arranged with as much propriety; but you do not set your periods to a tune. They discover a perpetual desire to exhibit themselves to advantage; whereas your subject ingrosses you; they sing, and you say; which, as history is a thing to be said, and not sung, is in my judgment very much to your advantage." Ibid. p. 101.

veil, whom he was made instrumental in raising to an inheritance among the sanctified. The seed which he cast on the watered furrows, will be seen too after many days; and to him the church will long feel herself greatly indebted, for the stores which he gathered into her sacred garner. To conclude:—He was esteemed and beloved in life, honored and deplored in death; and now he rests from his labors, with "the goodly fellowship of the prophets and of the apostles!"

RELIGIOUS COMMUNICATIONS.

APOCRYPHAL BOOKS.

From the best authority we are assured, that "all scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." The whole scripture is of divine inspiration, and is profitable for the highest purposes. It is fitted for doctrine, as it places the fundamental principles of religion in the view, it gives us of the divine nature and perfections; it is fitted to correct and reprove all errors in opinion and practice, correctly instructing in the principles of righteousness, and effectually leading those, who truly submit to it, from one degree of holiness to another, (which will continually advance) in proportion to the regard, which is paid to this blessed book of God.

The book, which we call the Bible, is of supreme and divine authority, written by men specially inspired for that purpose by the spirit of God. By the same authority and by the same men it has been published and delivered, as worthy of all acceptation, for the use and improvement of men to the end of time. Hence all men are bound to regulate their faith and conduct by the doctrines and rules therein contained.

These several things, with respect to the Bible, have hundreds of times been clearly illustrated and established; and the cavils, urged against them by infidel writers, have been fully exposed and refuted.

To enter the list of controversy with deists is not the object of the writer; nor is it his object to attempt a defence of our holy religion, but to remark on those books, contained in some editions of the Holy Bible, called the *Apocrypha*.

That these books, although they contain much useful and important instruction, constitute no part of canonical scripture, we shall attempt to prove from several topics of argument.

Those books, which we receive as inspired scripture, are called *canonical*, to distinguish them from books called *apocryphal*, and from other uninspired writings. They are so denominated from the Greek word *kanōn* a *rule* or measure; for as the civil law how fitly may be

termed the rule of a commonwealth, because the citizens ought to live conformably to it; so is divine scripture the rule of the church, according to which its members are to regulate their faith and practice.

The word *Apocrypha* signifies *hidden*, *secret* or *doubtful*, and the several books, included in this name, are called apocryphal because,

1. Their authority has always been doubted or denied by the church; nor were they ever acknowledged or received by the ancient church as books divinely inspired.

2. Because none of them were contained in the ark of the covenant, where the Jews deposited their sacred writings.

3. Because they are of uncertain and concealed original; and,

4. Because, for these reasons, it was not allowable publicly to read them in the assemblies of God's people. These particulars are substantiated by such authorities as to preclude, it is it is believed, all reasonable doubt.

That the books contained in the Apocrypha, are not of divine inspiration, and therefore ought not to be received as canonical scripture, it will now be attempted more fully to prove by the following arguments, which the writer has collected in the course of his reading on the subject.

1. All the books of the Old Testament were written by prophets, or persons divinely inspired; but none of the apocryphal books were written by such persons; therefore they are not to be acknowledged and received as canonical. The several parts of this argument, it will be attempted briefly to illustrate and establish. The first proposition is evident from several express declarations of canonical scripture, "The prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." Hence they are called "the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith." The great Inspirer of scripture hath assured us that "He spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the world began."

These passages prove that the books of the Old Testament were written by prophets, or persons divinely inspired. An elaborate proof of this position is not intended, nor will it be expected by the christian reader. But, should he consider the proof as deficient, it is hoped that the deficiency will be supplied before the subject is dismissed. The stamp of divine inspiration, which we find on the books of the Old Testament, is not to be found on the books of the Apocrypha. None of these were written by men, "moved by the Holy Ghost." This position admits satisfactory proof.

Malachi is universally acknowledged by believers in revelation to have been the last of the Jewish prophets under the legal dispensation. Between him and John the Baptist no prophet existed. But the apocryphal books were written after the time of Malachi's prophecy. This, if not universally, is generally acknowledged by writers on the

subject. Hence it is evident, that these books could not have been written by any of the prophets.

With much propriety and pertinence it may farther be observed, that had the apocryphal books been written by the ancient prophets of God, Jesus Christ would unquestionably have used them as witnesses that he was indeed the Messiah, and that his doctrines were divine, as he employed the prophetic writings to these purposes. But, as neither Christ, nor his apostles made this use of the apocryphal books, the evidence is very forcible; and, it is believed, must be satisfactory to the reflecting mind, that these books were not written by the prophets or men divinely inspired.

2. The Jewish church acknowledged and received, as canonical scripture, all the books of the Old Testament, but never thus acknowledged and received the apocryphal books. From this circumstance it is believed, that much and even conclusive evidence is deducible, that these books are not of divine inspiration.

Had the Jewish church rejected any part of canonical scripture, Christ and his apostles would undoubtedly have censured and condemned them for so doing. But for this, it does not appear, that they ever merited any censure. Although Christ reproved them for unjust interpretation of their sacred writings, yet he does not charge them with the rejection of any part of canonical scripture; nor does the apostle Paul, when speaking of the oracles of God, as having been committed unto them, intimate that they had ever been guilty of this crime. Indeed we find them no where, in the New Testament accused of having concealed or disowned any portion of their scriptures. From this circumstance it may be safely inferred, that they faithfully preserved and explicitly acknowledged all the books of the Old Testament as canonical scripture. But it is certain, that they never acknowledged the apocryphal books, as of divine inspiration. Is it not therefore an obvious consequence that these books were not written by inspiration of the Spirit of God?

3. Our Saviour gave his testimony to the books of the Old Testament, as of divine original, by quoting from them, and by declaring that they alluded to him as the Messiah. He thus addressed his disciples after his resurrection, "These are the words, which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms concerning me, &c." In this passage are summarily comprised all the books in the Old Testament scriptures, in these three classes, the *law*, the *prophets*, and the *psalms*. As this testimony of our Saviour confirms the writings of the Old Testamentas canonical scripture, so it seems evidently to exclude from the sacred canon all the apocryphal books.

4. It will further contribute to the establishment of our object, to observe that the fathers in the christian church unite in implicit testimony, that the apocryphal books never received

a place among the books either of the Old or New Testament scriptures. The council of Laodicea, holden in the year of our Lord 368, reckoning up the books of canonical scripture, as we now have them, and which only they direct to be read publicly in christian assemblies, make no mention of the books of the Apocrypha. From this circumstance it is reasonable to infer, that these books make no part of inspired scripture. That this is indeed the case is presumptively evident.

5. From the style and much of the matter of the apocryphal books. It requires but little acuteness of mind to discover, in the character of each, satisfactory evidence that these books are merely human compositions. Instead of the gravity and majesty, the surprising sublimity, and yet the beautiful and captivating simplicity of the scripture style, we find in them, in many instances, the characters of *levity*, of *affectation*, of *idle curiosity*, &c. And in their *matter*, there are so many things *frivolous and trifling*, *ridiculous and absurd*, *false and superstitious*, *contradictory to canonical scripture*, *and even contradictory to themselves*, that the sober enquirer must be led to reject them, as inspired writings, and to pronounce them merely human compositions.

N——E.

(To be continued.)

ON CHURCH GOVERNMENT.

The importance of ecclesiastical councils to the order and government of churches, renders it interesting to understand clearly the authority given them in the New Testament, and its provision for their being convened. The apostle Paul thought it needful to vindicate his preaching at Corinth, as not going beyond the line marked out in his commission. Other ministers of Christ, whether evangelists or pastors of churches, are no less obligated to be able to show, that they do not stretch themselves beyond their measure; either to dispense the word, or to bear rule in the house of God. The apostle's declaration is, "We will not boast of things without *our* measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you."

Christians, who rely on the fulness of the Bible, as the rule of their faith and practice, will trust to its sufficiency to teach the discipline of the church, as well as all gospel duties. To this book, not to any human authority, are we to look for the guidance and justification of our actions. And here may be found the powers which Christ has entrusted to his ministers, the form of his church, the officers he employs in it, and the extent of their jurisdiction; with various commands and examples illustrative of their work, as appointed to feed the church of God.

When Christ ascended and gave gifts to men, "he gave some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers." Pastors and teachers are the ordinary officers of his church, authorized to preach the word and bear rule. They have two distinct offices united; as rulers they are pastors; as dispensers of the word they are teachers. Hence arise the duties enjoin-

ed on believers, "Remember them who have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God:" "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls:" And the command to elders, "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God." To feed the church implies bearing rule. The same original word is used when it is said of Christ, he shall rule them with a rod of iron. * That Christ has united the two duties of ruling and teaching is also implied in the character required of a bishop, as "one that ruleth well his own house:" "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God."

The church in which the same elders rule, is uniformly in the New Testament of the extent of the city to which it belongs. However many christians lived in any one city, and whatever was the number of their elders, they were one church.

We read of the church in the house of Aquila and Priscilla, the church in the house of Nymphas: and in writing to Philemon, Paul uses the expression, "The church in thy house." These probably were the congregations of believers, who assembled for worship in those houses; not being permitted to enjoy, and perhaps not able to build public edifices for their religious meetings. And it seems to be in reference to such assemblies, that the apostle writes to the Corinthians, "Let your women keep silence in the churches." But,

When the word is connected with a city, it is uniformly in the singular number, church, and never churches in the plural; tho' when used in relation to a country or territory, having a number of cities, it is always churches. Thus we read of the church at Jerusalem, the church at Antioch, the church of Laodicea, the church at Babylon, the church of Ephesus, the church in Smyrna, and the church in, or of, other cities; we also read of the churches through all Judea, churches of the gentiles, churches of Galatia, churches of Asia, churches of Macedonia. This precision in the use of the word is doubtless of design, and shows that, as under the Old Testament so under the New, the inhabitants, or believers, of each city were a distinct society, subject to one jurisdiction of elders.

All the churches instituted by the apostles, we must believe, were of one form, and of like organization. The instances in which we find a plurality of elders are sufficiently numerous to prove that they were required by the gospel order of the church. We read of the elders of the church at Jerusalem, the elders of the church of Ephesus; certain prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch, and bishops at Philippi. That all these ministers of Christ, though mentioned by different names, had one office, it is not necessary to prove. And that all the churches were in the same manner organized with a plurality of elders, is further confirmed by such passages

* Compare Acts xx. 28, Rev. ii, 27. xii. 5. and xix. 15.

as these; "Let him call for the elders of the church." "The elders which are among you, I exhort; feed the flock of God, which is among you;" "Ordained elders in every church"—"Ordain elders in every city."

The joint exercise of authority by the elders of a church is another circumstance of importance. The elders of the church at Jerusalem, with the apostles and brethren, united to form the decrees, which are mentioned as "ordained of the apostles and elders." Paul addressed the elders of the church of Ephesus, as a brotherhood or presbytery, in directing them to take heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost had made them overseers. They were unitedly bishops (Επισκοπους) of the same church. The presbytery at Jerusalem were the elders of one church; that at Ephesus of another church. The letters written by the apostle John to the seven churches of Asia, are too much to the purpose to be unnoticed in this discussion. Each letter is addressed in the same manner, to the angel of the church. Several if not all of them respect official duty. The angel is spoken to as a collective body, or presbytery, in both the singular and plural number, in the words *thou*, *thee*, *ye*, *you*, and *some of you:* and in the plural is distinguished from the private members of the church, in the declaration, "Unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira." These are indications that the angel was a collective body. That it was so, is undeniable in the instance of the church of Ephesus, whose elders whom Paul commanded to feed the church, were the angel addressed in relation to the same duty, by John.

One branch of official duty is to ordain to the ministry. The New Testament gives no warrant to any private brother to lay on his hand in this consecration. Both example and precept give the authority to do it to men previously invested with the office. "The things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." The prophets and teachers at Antioch, ordained Barnabas and Paul to their evangelic mission: and they, where they ministered, ordained elders in every church. Paul also left Titus in Crete to ordain elders. And he reminds Timothy of the gift which was in him, or his ministerial authority, which he tells was given him "by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery."

That a number of elders, being the elders of one church, or a presbytery, have authority to ordain is plain; but whether one elder or pastor alone has the authority is not so evident. Paul writes to Timothy of the gift, which he says was in him, "by the putting on of my hands;" but as he also mentions the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, if in both he has reference to his ordination, we are led to the conclusion, that Paul was a member of the presbytery, and acted as its moderator or presiding elder in that solemnity, in which he entrusted to Timothy the things which he committed

to him among many witnesses.* The directions to Timothy and to Titus on this subject, though they respect them personally, have a consistent meaning, without implying that they were to act singly in the business, or otherwise than as Paul acted with the presbytery in laying hands on Timothy. And it does not appear from any example in the New Testament, nor from any command or duty enjoined, that a church is so completely organized without a plurality of elders, as to be authorized to ordain, or to exercise ecclesiastical jurisdiction.

A church consisting of a single congregation, without a pastor, has no official character, to lay on hands in ordaining a pastor for itself; and with a pastor, has no authority, should he be accused of a fault, to judge and censure or depose him. Neither is it rational to believe, that Christ has instituted one form of jurisdiction for the trial of elders, and another for private brethren. And it is not more rational to suppose, that authority to judge and acquit or condemn, depends on the mutual consent and appointment of the accuser and accused. No such system is intimated in the gospel: on the contrary, the angel of the church is spoken to, as having authority over both officers and private members of the church; and as blameable in not exercising this authority, when occasion required. "Thou hast tried them, who say they are apostles and are not, and hast found them liars." "Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews and are not, to come and worship before thy feet." "Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee; because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, to teach and to seduce." "I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam."

The angel in all these instances is an authority, not formed for the occasion only, and thus to exist no longer, but abiding, competent to the trial of all cases that occur, and responsible for doing it. There is no sending to other churches, or to distant pastors for a council to ordain an elder, or a court to try one who is impeached: no selecting from a distance to answer a particular purpose.

Elders are commanded to take heed to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost has made them overseers. This is the church of God they are to feed. Christians are to remember, and to obey those who have the rule over them. And these are they that have spoken to them the word of God, and that watch for their souls.

It is not supposed to be inconsistent with the representation, which has been given, for different congregations of believers to have their respective pastors. But if a council of elders is needed to act in any matter, it must be the presbytery of the vicinage. If pastors of any distant churches be invited to assist, by their advice, or even by performing any public service, it is not conceived that Christ has given them authority to control the decision of any judicial question. All

* Compare 1 Tim. iv. 14, with 2 Tim. i. 6 and 22.

the believers in fellowship with each other are one church, to such an extent as is requisite for all purposes of gospel order and government. Over the church of this extent the Holy Ghost has made the elders overseers to feed the church of God.

How far, or in what manner, Christ requires the concurrence of the brethren with the elders, are questions which do not directly affect the design in view. It may notwithstanding be observed, that the multitude of the disciples chose the seven deacons, whom the apostles ordained, which proceeding may be viewed as an example. And the decrees that were ordained of the apostles and elders, which were at Jerusalem, were established by them with the brethren; each of whom is distinctly named as assenting: "the apostles and elders and brethren." And it pleased "the apostles and elders with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch." Here the liberty of believers is secured, in unison with the authority intrusted to the elders.

It is pleasing to reflect, that the system of ecclesiastical order and jurisdiction, of which, it is thought the New Testament gives a sufficiently plain account, accords so fully, as it does, with the most important maxims of civil jurisprudence, adopted by the wisest statesmen, after long experience in the most enlightened ages of the world. No civil tribunal is more perfect, than a court of judges, assisted by a body of jurors, consisting of men in common life taken from the vicinage.

The elders of the church have the authority of judges; the consent of the brethren to give form to their decrees, secures the liberty of the individuals of Christ's family. E. H.

TRUE REPENTANCE EXEMPLIFIED IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PSALMIST.

Would we form correct views of the christian character and graces produced by the Holy Spirit, we may safely consult the Psalms. Repentance, which is a principal and distinguishing characteristic of a christian, is admirably defined in the Psalms called penitential. Of these the fifty-first is the most remarkable. This Psalm exhibits, in the most clear and distinguishing manner, the nature and traits of true repentance. These, as here exemplified in the experience of the psalmist, it may be useful distinctly to consider.

1. The psalmist had a constant sight of his actual transgressions. "My sin is ever before me." His mind was awakened to a consideration of his conduct. Willing to see his offences, they appeared to him in their true light; and a distinct view of their number and magnitude made such an impression on his mind as could never be effaced. Such a sight of sin was not peculiar to the psalmist. Though persons may not have been openly vicious, yet, when they penitently consider what they have done in violation of the divine law, and what they have not done which God has commanded, their transgressions appear exceedingly great and numerous; so great and numerous, indeed, that they can never

forget them. The sins of a true penitent are ever before him.

2. The psalmist had an affecting view of his native depravity. He seems at first to have been filled with astonishment, as if he knew not how to account for his guilty conduct. But he soon traced his actual transgressions to his depraved heart. From this fountain he perceived that all the offences of his life had proceeded. Hence, he exclaimed—"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." He was convinced that he was a sinner by nature; that he was naturally destitute of moral goodness, and opposed to the divine character, law and government. And according to the psalmist and the other inspired writers, such is the native character of all mankind. All true penitents, however moral and upright may have been their external conduct, clearly see and deeply feel, and freely confess the total moral depravity of their hearts.

3. The psalmist viewed his sin as an offence against God. "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." God is the moral governor of the universe; and to him all moral agents are accountable. Every sin is an act of rebellion against him and a contempt of his authority. Such is the view which every true penitent has of sin; and sin so viewed appears exceedingly sinful. In view of his daring contempt of the holy commandments of God, David seems to have lost sight of the injury he had done to his fellow men. Mankind are naturally very ignorant or forgetful of the authority and government of God, and of their obligation to obey his commands. Hence they view sin as evil, only on account of the injury which it brings upon themselves and others. But all, who have a true knowledge of sin, see it to be pointed against the character and government of God; and when viewed in this light it appears in its truly hateful and malignant nature.

4. The psalmist was greatly distressed on account of his sins. He compared his distress to the pain of broken bones. "Make me to hear joy and gladness; that the bones which thou hast broken may rejoice." In another place he says—"My bones waxed old through my roaring all the day." And again, "Mine iniquities have taken hold on me, so that I am not able to look up: they are more than the hairs of my head; therefore my heart faileth me." The sorrow of true penitents is compared by one of the prophets to the sorrow of one, who mourneth for an only son, and to the bitterness of one, that is in bitterness for a firstborn. In the days of the apostles, multitudes in view of their sins cried out—"What must we do to be saved." Though all penitents do not experience equal distress, yet often at the present day, they suffer such pain for sin, as may justly be compared to the torture of broken bones. All true penitents are described in the holy scriptures as mourners, and are said to be of a broken heart.

5. The psalmist realized the justice of God in his own condemnation. "That thou mightest be justified," says he, "when

thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest." He realized that the law which he had broken was holy, just and good, and was sensible, that he deserved to suffer its curse. This curse is nothing less than endless punishment; and this punishment is what every sinner deserves. "As it is written, cursed is every one, who continueth not in all the things, which are written in the book of the law to do them." Every true penitent heartily approves of the law, and accepts the punishment of his iniquity. If mankind do not deserve endless punishment, the gospel is not founded in truth; but is absurd and false: for the gospel offers a deliverance from endless punishment, and declares that none can be saved from it only through the atonement of Christ. But it were rather an insult, than an act of kindness to offer salvation from a punishment, which is not deserved. Every true penitent feels that he is unworthy of the least favor, and that he deserves the wrath and curse of God, both in this life and that which is to come. No one, who does not view himself as deserving of endless punishment, can consistently ask for mercy through the gospel of Christ. When the psalmist expressed a sense of the justice of God, in his own condemnation, he expressed nothing more, than what is felt by every real penitent.

6. The psalmist confessed his sin. When reproved by Nathan, he made no attempt to hide or excuse his sins, but said, "I have sinned against the Lord." He then composed the fifty-first Psalm, a Psalm of confession, which was publickly read, and was made a part of the public psalmody at the tabernacle. Every true penitent has such a sight of his vileness, and such an abhorrence of sin, that he desires to condemn himself, and to express his disapprobation of his wickedness, without the least reserve, and as publickly as truth and duty may require.

7. The psalmist pleads for pardon wholly through the mercy of God. "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions." David had been a man of eminent piety before his fall, and performed great and signal services in the cause of God. But of these services he makes no account. He says nothing to justify himself, or to excuse, or extenuate his guilt. As he made no mention of past services, so he made no attempt to obtain forgiveness by good resolutions and fair promises. The mercy, the loving kindness, and the multitude of the tender mercies of God were the only foundation of his hopes and of his prayers. His prayers were very earnest. He knew, that if mere sovereign grace did not forgive and save him he must perish. Such are the views and exercises of all penitents, as to the way of obtaining forgiveness. Tell a true penitent of his good character and conduct, and he will exclaim, "Behold, I am vile. I abhor myself. I am as an unclean thing and all my righteousnesses are as filthy rags." Promise him the favor of God, on account of his own righteousness, and he

is grieved at his heart. The mercy of God is all the hope and all the plea of every penitent; and he will be happy if he may live and die with an humble heart, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." SERAIAH.

(To be continued.)

SELECTIONS.

ADDRESS TO CHRISTIANS RESPECTING THE JEWS.

From the London Evangelical Magazine, 1806.

Two great events are rendered certain by the unerring voice of prophecy,—the conversion of the Jews, and the gathering of the fulness of the Gentiles to Jesus Christ. To the Jews it was first sent; and myriads believed on Jesus as the promised Messiah; the mass of the nation, however, remained still in unbelief. Since that time their situation is changed only for the worse; and it may be doubted whether during the last ten centuries so many Jews have been brought to embrace christianity, as during the first ten years after the death of Christ. So remarkable a thing should not pass unobserved. Multitudes of the most abandoned of the human race, in every other country, where the truth has been preached, have submitted to Jesus, and taken his yoke upon them; but how seldom has a Jew been prevailed on to deny himself, to take up his cross and follow Christ? Are we to ascribe this to the wrath of Jehovah, and to the manifestation of his awful justice on that devoted nation, for rejecting the true and promised Messiah, and to hold before the eyes of other nations the heinousness of their crime? It must be at the same time acknowledged, that in consequence of the wicked lives of men calling themselves christians, and the cruel treatment they have received age after age the Jews may be supposed to have imbibed the most inveterate prejudices against Jesus, his religion and his disciples. Now and then indeed an individual of the Jewish nation is converted to the faith of Christ, as a proof that God has not finally cast off his people, but that he will gather them in again. Of these persons how surprising is it, that we do not read of one, who ever devoted himself to the service of the Jewish people, and who spent his days in seeking their conversion! But such a person has now been raised up.

Joseph Samuel C. F. Frey of the seed of Abraham, born in Germany, having learned of the Father, and been brought to believe in the name of the Son of God, studied for some time at Berlin, and was afterwards upwards of three years in the Missionary Seminary at Gosport, receiving instruction, with a view to preach the gospel to the Jews. He has since settled in London with this view; and has labored not without encouragement; as "he does not despise the day of small things." As the work is so important, and at the same time so

very arduous it becomes the true disciples of Jesus to enquire, "What is our duty in respect to this great object?"

A kind and affectionate deportment to the posterity of Jews, is certainly incumbent on us. The miracles wrought in the world by love have been greater and more numerous, than those performed by power. *Prayer* for them, and for the success of the labors of God's dear servants among them is indispensably requisite. Too frequent has been the neglect of this, in public, in domestic, and in secret devotions; and when it has not been forgotten, how often has it been the prayer of custom, not of faith! Consider the obligations which lie upon us. The divine command and the examples of the saints in scripture, unite in enjoining us to offer our heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, that they may be saved. Gratitude likewise pleads powerfully in their behalf! From whom did we derive that salvation through Jesus, in which we greatly rejoice? Were not Moses and the prophets Jews? Were not the apostles of the Lamb Jews? Was not our Saviour himself, as to his human nature, of the seed of Abraham? Surely, then, whoever is forgotten by us in prayer, it should not be the Jews? Prayer is God's appointed means of accomplishing the predictions of scripture; and whoever has heard God say that he will give birth to some auspicious event by the instrumentality of men, should immediately begin to pray that it may be fulfilled; and the nearer the season of the fulfilment approaches, the more frequent and fervent should be his supplications. The influence of this glorious event on others, in which we are nearly concerned, while it adds to its importance, should increase the fervency of our prayers. How many profess an earnest and laudable desire for the conversion of the Heathen? But the calling of the Jews will, according to the unerring decision of the sacred scriptures, contribute in the highest degree to this desired issue. And should not this consideration give additional energy to our supplications? Our own personal benefit is likewise involved in the act. Not one prayer of faith ever ascended to heaven without bringing down a blessing! Every supplication therefore, which we offer for the Jews, will return with a tenfold benefit into our own bosoms! I may add, the Redeemer will be glorified thereby; and "though Israel be not gathered, we shall be glorious in the eyes of the Lord." Let us weigh these considerations, brethren, in the balance of the sanctuary. The result I trust will be a spirit of more frequent and fervent prayer for God's ancient people, and for his ministering servants, who have devoted themselves to them for Jesus' sake. Do you feel grief of heart that you have not attended more diligently to this important duty, and that the poor Israelites have been passed by in forgetfulness? Henceforth let them never be forgotten, either in the service of the sanctuary, in the devotions of the family, or in the exercises of the closet. If the hundreds of thousands of God's saints in the world were to be found cry-

ing to him day and night for the conversion of the posterity of Abraham his friend, we might soon have the pleasure to hear that the Deliverer was come out of Zion, and had begun to turn away ungodliness from Jacob; and churches of Jewish believers in Christ, would be heard offering up their songs of praise to God, and the Lamb not only in Britain, but in other countries where they are scattered abroad.

THOUGHTLESS YOUTH. *A Scrap.*

WHEN I see the youth of either sex arrived at that age wherein nature is just risen to its elegance and vigor, and when they begin to shew themselves to the world, my heart pities them as so many borderers upon the grave, yet most of them are utterly thoughtless of dying. Little do they imagine in those years of gaiety, mirth and madness, that they are treasuring up vengeance to themselves, by their thoughtless rebellion against the Power that made them. Little do they think that their lives are every moment due to the justice of God, as a sacrifice, each for their own iniquity. Young creatures, but bold sinners! They are weaned from the nursery, they are got loose from their parents' wing, and they vainly exult and riot in their new freedom; they gad abroad in the wide world, wanton and lavish in all the delights which the vigor of depraved nature inspires. They know not how to bear the checks of piety, and the restraints of wisdom, nor will they endure the tenderest admonitions of a parent or an aged friend. They have no apprehension of the angel of death near them, as though it was beyond the reach of his commission, or the flight of his arrows, to smite any of their station or character. In the morning of nature they feel themselves alive, and they fancy it is immortality.

WATTS.

A SEASONABLE HINT.

WE should be moderate in our judgments concerning the application of promises and predictions with regard to their seasons. Many have contended about the time wherein some prophecies are to be fulfilled, which have long since received their principal accomplishment. Unbelief hides the accomplishment of promises from the eyes of men. So our Lord speaking of his coming to avenge his elect (referring particularly to the destruction of Jerusalem,) adds, "nevertheless, when the son of man cometh shall he find faith on the earth," (Luke xviii. 8.) Men will not understand his work through unbelief. That God is faithful in all his promises and predictions; that they shall all be accomplished in their proper season; that they are all the fruits of his love and care towards his church; and that they all tend to the advancement of his glory, these are things that ought to be fixed with us; but beyond these limits we ought to be guarded by peculiar caution; the analogy of faith, modesty, and patience; *prophecies not being the rule of any actions.*

Dr. Owen on Heb. iv. 6.

REVIEW.

Steadfast adherence to the oracles of God, as the only rule of christian faith and duty, an indispensable qualification for the ministerial office. A Sermon preached at the ordination of the Rev. Avery Williams, to the pastoral care of the congregational church and society in Lexington, December 30, 1807. *By Samuel Kendall, d. d. minister of the congregational church and society, in Weston.* Boston: Munroe, Francis & Parker. 1808.

The doctrines, designated as *the doctrines of the reformation, the doctrines of grace, evangelical and orthodox*, have a distinctive character, and are generally known. These doctrines have always been opposed; sometimes in a manner more direct and open, sometimes in a manner more indirect and covert. Of late, however, the fashion has been not so much to attack these doctrines directly, as to decry adherence to any particular doctrines, as essential or important. From representations, which we continually hear, one would be ready to conclude, that the very essence and perfection of christianity consist either in believing in no doctrines whatever, or, which amounts to the same thing, in holding all religious sentiments to be equally scriptural and good. *Creeds*, therefore, and *confessions of faith* are all to be utterly discarded, as unwarrantable, unscriptural, and of most disastrous tendency. This is the popular cry, the fashionable note of declamation. It has the appearance, indeed, of great liberality, as it makes a general sweep without any distinction; but this appearance is only specious. It is well understood, that the adversaries of evangelical truth have nothing to lose by the general demolition of *creeds*, for they have none to be demolished. It is in orthodox churches only, or with perhaps a very few exceptions, that confessions of faith are to be found. The popular cry, therefore, against confessions, though specious in its pretensions, we can view in no other light, than that of a masked attack upon the doctrines of grace. In general it is aimed at the prostration of evangelical truth. Though the strongholds of truth are not to be carried by open assault, the hope is probably entertained that they may be taken by stratagem. And it must be confessed, that could the orthodox churches be prevailed on to give up their creeds, and admit the popular sentiment of the age, that no particular doctrines are of any importance, or that all religious opinions are equally good, a great point would be gained. "The faith once delivered to the saints" would no longer be contended for, and "the offence of the cross would cease."

The sermon now before us, we took up, with sentiments of great personal respect for the author; but we felt in the perusal of it, we confess, very sensi-

ble regret, and not a little surprise. It is a sermon of the fashionable stamp, and upon the fashionable theme of ordination discourses. It is aimed entirely against *creeds and confessions of faith;* and if not with greater felicity and effect, yet at least with greater zeal and exertion, than we have commonly seen. And on this account chiefly it is, that we deem it deserving of particular notice.

The passage chosen by Dr. K. for his text, is, Titus i. 9. "*Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*"

After an introduction, not remarkably appropriate or concise, referring to his text, our author observes,

> "The apostle it will be conceded had in view some standard of truth, which the elder is to observe in teaching and ruling in the church, and which he conceived an adequate rule of christian faith and ministerial duty. What this rule is, and its claim to the character of the faithful word; by whom, and for what reasons, it must be held fast; and when it is suitably regarded, will be the leading subjects of our enquiry."

The result of his first enquiry the Dr. expresses as follows:

> "The inspired scripture is the rule of faith intended, the faithful word to be held fast, as taught by "holy men of God, who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."

To this we have nothing to object. We hold the "inspired scripture to be the rule of faith, the faithful word to be held fast" by all christian ministers, and christian people: and we readily admit, as sound and good, the reasons offered by our author, in support of the "claims," which the scripture has to this high distinction. But we cannot so readily admit, that the *words* of scripture only, without reference to any sense, or interpretation of them, are to be held fast; for, "as a rule of faith," we can form no conception of the use of words, whether such as "man's wisdom teacheth," or even such as "the Holy Ghost teacheth," any farther than the true sense or interpretation of them is regarded. To contend therefore, for the mere words, and not for the true doctrine, or mind of the Spirit in the scriptures, to us, appears idle and preposterous. This however, if we do not misapprehend him, Dr. K. has done. There is indeed a great ambiguity, and want of precision in his manner of expressing himself on this subject. He involves himself continually in circumlocutions, universalities, and qualifying phrases. But the whole drift of his discourse evidently proceeds upon the assumption, that the letter, the mere words of scripture, and not any particular meaning, or interpretation of them, are to be "held fast as the standard of faith." It is upon this ground precisely, that we find his fortified camp; and it is here that he has planted his battery against creeds and confessions of faith. If it be admitted, that not the mere words of scripture, but their sense, or the mind of the Spirit in them, in whatever form of words it may be truly expressed, is to be regarded as "the rule of faith,"

the Dr.'s ground is gone at once, and his whole labor is lost.

For the support of his grand principle he appears to rely on the first clause of his text. "*Holding fast the faithful word.*" This he would have us understand, as an apostolic direction, that the elder or minister of the gospel, should hold fast the *words* of scripture. The intelligent reader, however, will observe, that the apostle goes farther. The direction is, "Holding fast the faithful word, *as he hath been taught.*" But what are we to understand by the elder, or minister, *having been taught.* Does the apostle here suppose him to have been taught merely to read the *words* of scripture? Or does he suppose him to have been taught the true doctrine or sense of those words. If the latter, as we believe few will undertake to dispute, then the elder is required to hold fast, not the mere words of scripture only, but their true doctrine or sense.

It is yet further to be observed, that the elder is to "hold fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, *that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers.*" But who are these gainsayers? Are they infidels only, or those who deny the scriptures altogether? Are they not those rather, who, though they admit the words, yet deny the true doctrines of scripture? But how are these gainsayers to be convinced, if, not the true sense, but only the mere words of scripture, are to be held fast? And farther, whatever may be their doctrines, or opinions, so long as they do not deny the words of scripture, why should any attempt be made to convince them, or of what are they to be convinced? But the elder is enjoined to "hold fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught; that by *sound*, uncorrupt *doctrine*, he may be able both to administer comfort to believers and excite them to their duty, and to confute the errors of all opposers, silence their cavils, and rebuke their perverseness."*

Something more then is certainly intended in the text, than a steady adherence to mere words. Indeed, we are almost constrained to believe, that the apostle would have had no great objection to the elder's adhering to a good *confession*, concisely and properly expressing what he had been taught to receive, as the true doctrines of scripture.

But our author says,

> "Holding fast the faithful word, as he hath been taught, does not intend that a candidate for the ministry should tenaciuosly adhere, without farther examination, to sentiments impressed on his mind by early education, or by his assistants in the study of divinity; but that he is always to keep his thoughts upon the divine word, as the standard of truth, and prove or correct his opinions by it."

Very good, but what then? The question is not whether in *all cases*, "a candidate for the ministry, or the inducted minister, is to adhere to the sentiments, which, by whatever means, have been "impressed ou his mind;" but is he, in *any case*, thus to adhere? Is he required to embrace the truth, as taught in the scriptures, and,

* See Dr. Guise on the text.

having embraced it, to hold it fast? This is the great question. For if the candidate, or minister, is required to embrace the true doctrines of scripture, and to adhere to them; then certainly, he is to do something more, than merely to hold fast scripture words and phrases. He is to hold fast the true sense of scripture, in whatever words expressed, and to "*teach no other doctrine.*" And if so, why may he not be required, or at least allowed, to *confess* his faith explicitly, and in such words as most definitely express the scripture doctrines, in which he believes?

But here Dr. K. again observes:

"The perfections and professed design of the Author of our holy religion forbid the supposition that essential doctrines, the belief of which is necessary to the true christian, are not plain, but hidden mysteries, to honest enquirers after the truth. Can it be that the word of God, professedly revealed from heaven, to be "a light to our path," is so imperfect, mysterious and unintelligible a rule of faith, respecting important points of doctrine, a belief of which is essential to every true christian, that something more explicit and definite, if not altogether of human origin, yet of human modification and language, must be made the touchstone, by which the correctness of a man's sentiments, and even the purity of his religious affections are to be tried?"

Such is the emphatical manner in which our author is pleased to express himself, upon the plainness of the scriptures. But who could have imagined that the great plainness of the scriptures would ever have been urged, as an objection against confessions of faith!

Is it then because confessions of faith are less plain, less intelligible and definite, than the scriptures, that they are opposed? This we confess, we had not until now understood. But if this be not the fact, where does the objection lie? If with respect to "important points of doctrine" the scriptures are so plain, that "honest enquirers after truth" can find no difficulty in ascertaining what they are; then surely the "honest" believer in the truth can have no objection to declaring what he understands them to be. Does it not follow, as a fair inference, that those, who are unwilling to subscribe to a confession of faith, in which the plain doctrines of the gospel are concisely but plainly expressed, are not "honest?" But will Dr. K. abide this inference?

Plain as the scriptures are, is it not, however a fact that they are differently and even oppositely construed? Is it not a fact, as notorious at it is melancholy, that there have always been in the world "men of corrupt minds, not enduring sound doctrine," but disposed to "pervert the scriptures, and privily to bring in even damnable heresies?" Has not christendom, in all ages, been deluged with errors, even by those who profess to hold fast the words of inspired scripture? And if so, ought not the true churches of Christ, and the friends of truth generally to distinguish themselves, as "the light of the world," as "a city upon an hill." Is it not proper and important, that, amidst abounding errors and corruptions, they should let it be known, that they still "hold

fast the faithful word as they have been taught" and are not ashamed of the doctrines of the cross? Thus they lift up the standard of the gospel in the most conspicuous manner, as the grand point of union among themselves, and as "an ensign to the people?" And that they be so prepared, that "if any come unto them, and bring not this doctrine, they may not receive them," and that they may detect those, "who say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie?"

If, as our author represents, the great doctrines of the gospel are so plainly expressed in the scriptures, that no "honest enquirer" can mistake them; what objection can there be to having them drawn up for occasional use, in the plain and concise form of a creed, or confession? And if plain, as the scriptures are, they are nevertheless so misconstrued and perverted, that men may profess a belief in them, and yet deny or explain away their most important doctrines; may not creeds or confessions, be not only warrantable, but of great use for the security and fellowship of the churches, and for the honor and advancement of the Redeemer's cause?

But, says our author, "the nature of the case requires each to judge for himself what are the doctrines of revelation." True; and having judged for himself what the doctrines of revelation are, may he not also confess his belief in them in such manner and form, as he shall deem correct and proper? If two or three, after judging for themselves, coincide in their views, why may not they adopt the same form of confession? And if a church, or any "associated body," after judging severally for themselves, harmoniously concur in the leading doctrines of the gospel, why may not they, also, thus far agree in the same confession of faith, and if they deem it proper, declare their agreement to the world?

But our author again:

> "Must we concede to them the right to associate, and, by a plurality of votes, to fix upon a creed, composed in words which their own, or some other man's wisdom teacheth; to which we must assent or be denied their charity and fellowship, and subjected not only to inconvenience, but to the charge of heresy?"

A hard case truly. But can we *deny* their "right to associate," and to adopt, in the manner they judge most proper, such "a creed," as, in their view, is consonant with the word of God? May not individuals, may not ministers and churches, as many as are disposed, regularly associate for the purposes of mutual edification, and of promoting the general interests of truth and religion, and publicly confess their agreement in the great and essential articles of our holy religion? Shall they be denied this privilege? Shall they for using it, be charged before the world, with "invading the rights of conscience," and with "feeling no very strong objections to papal authority, if they might choose in what hands it shall be placed?" If the creed which they adopt be not consentaneous with the lively oracles; then let it be fairly opposed and exploded. But if it truly express the great doctrines of Christ; then let it stand; and let all the

friends of truth rejoice, that in a degenerate age, so many are found to "hold fast the faithful word, as they have been taught."

But,

"By adopting a human standard, or test, of religious opinions, we tell the world by fair implication, that we have not entire confidence in the scripture, as a rule of faith for any who do not believe just as we do, or that all who differ from us are either weak or dishonest."

We have not been accustomed to regard creeds or confessions, as standards of faith, paramount to the scriptures: we have considered them only as an open, concise, and definitive expression, of what are supposed to be the leading doctrines, which the scriptures contain. If a confession "teach for doctrine, the commandments of men," let it be denominated "*human*," and rejected. But if a confession only express in other words, the true doctrine of scripture, it cannot, we believe, be justly branded as a mere "human standard." Neither does the adopting of such a confession imply any want of proper "confidence in the scriptures." It may, indeed, imply that we suppose the scriptures, though perfect in their design, are yet liable to perversion: and that they are liable to perversion, who will undertake to deny? Are we not, indeed, warned by the Spirit of truth himself, that men may "wrest the scriptures even to their destruction?" And shall we, then, be chargeable with disrespect to the scriptures, if we only use proper means to save them from being perverted, or to guard ourselves and others against the pernicious consequences of their perversion?

It is important, we think, to be observed, that it is not against creeds and confessions only, that Dr. K.'s arguments and objections lie; they lie with equal force, against all exposition of the scriptures, against preaching, and against expressing any views of religious doctrine on any occasion, or in any manner, otherwise than in scripture words and phrases. The *words* of scripture, merely, are to be held fast. The scriptures are plain and easy to be understood, and every one is to judge for himself of their sense. For any person, therefore, or number of persons, to undertake to express the doctrines of revelation, or to say what they are, in any other than scripture language, is arrogant and presumptuous, is an infringement of the rights of conscience, is disrespectful to the spirit of inspiration, and is uncharitable to our fellow men. This, if we do not misconceive, is the sum of the whole. But if all this be correct and valid, then ministers have only to go into their pulpits, and rehearse the words of scripture without comment and exposition, and more privately "to reprove, rebuke and exhort" in scripture language; and people have only to hear and read, and talk over their scriptures. The man who expresses a religious sentiment in any other, than scripture language, commits an offence at once against God and his fellow men: and especially if he endeavours to bring others to believe in his views of divine truth, expressed in his own words, as being more correct than theirs, he gives ground for the "suspicion, that he feels no

very strong objections to papal authority, if he might only choose in what hands it shall be placed." Were this theory to be universally adopted and carried into effect, it must be confessed it would save a great deal of labor and trouble, and the now perturbed religious world might settle down in peace.

One serious difficulty, however, occurs. The words of our translation of the scriptures are not the words of the Holy Ghost; but only such as uninspired men thought proper to adopt to express their views of the sense of the original. It is not in these words, therefore, but in the words of the original Hebrew and Greek, that we must preach and converse, and on all occasions express divine truth. Still further, there are different readings in the various copies of our Hebrew and Greek scriptures, and the true one has not perhaps been ascertained. These differences must be settled by proper authority, before the passages in which they exist can be safely used. But alas! how small a proportion of the people understand the original languages. Fewer still, probably none, have ascertained, in all instances, the true reading.

On the whole, we cannot forbear again to express our regret, that Dr. K. should so devotedly enlist himself in this warfare against creeds and confessions. We are strongly persuaded, that his zealous exertions, in this instance, however well intended, are calculated rather to disserve, than to promote, the cause of truth. We think it of the utmost importance, that in this age of infidelity and error all the friends of the gospel should take open and decided ground against the abounding corruptions; let the world know, that they are not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; and unitedly "*hold fast the faithful word, as they have been taught, that they may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort* one another *and convince the* gainsayers." And we are far, very far, from believing that this is to be done by renouncing all confessions of faith, throwing open the doors of the churches to all comers, and adopting the *liberal* sentiments, that no particular doctrines are of any essential importance, or that all religious opinions are equally scriptural and good. Nor can we admit, as correct, what Dr. K. insinuates, that "the ground which protestants took, which dissenters from the church of England were careful to defend, and on which our pious and venerable ancestors in this country professed to stand," was a ground in opposition to confessions. So far from it, we believe it to be a fact, not to be disputed, "that protestants," and "dissenters," and "our pious and venerable ancestors" all had their confessions, to which they adhered with firmness, which they maintained with intrepidity, and at every risk against their powerful assailants, and which they found of vast use, in preserving the purity of their churches, and in promoting the essential interests of truth and religion.

DR. REES' CYCLOPŒDIA, VOL. II. PART 1.

Continued from Panoplist, page 511.

Article AMERICA. On this article we had observed an un-

common confusion of thought and expression, and had imputed it to an absolute incapacity in the writer, of expressing himself in any tolerable manner on any subject. But proceeding to the next page we find a different cause suggested.

"It is impossible here to enter into an analysis of the systems proposed for explaining the causes of this difference between the two parts of the same globe. It is a secret of nature on which the human mind becomes more and more confused in proportion as it obstinately determines to fathom it."

Here we are informed that the difference between the two parts of the globe, so much to the disadvantage of our western continent, is a *secret of nature*, and that the contemplation of this *secret* tends to confuse the the mind. Sad indeed! But what makes it sadder still is, that it *becomes more and more confused in proportion as it obstinately determines to fathom* this amazing secret. So that, it seems, this secret is a great Serbonian bog, in which even the giant understandings of Europeans are in danger of being utterly overwhelmed, while letting themselves down to fathom it. No wonder that our puny intellects can discover nothing about this secret, if the mighty minds of our European superiors become more and more *confused* and dizzy, while prying into it!

"Nevertheless, those physical vicissitudes, the earthquakes, the volcanoes, the inundations, and peculiar catastrophes, whereof we, who live in the calm of the elements, have not a very accurate idea, may have had some influence in its production; and it is well known at present that the most violent shocks of earthquakes, which are sometimes felt throughout the whole extent of the new continent, communicate no succession at all to ours."

What is a *vicissitude?* The proper meaning of the word is undoubtedly a *regular change*, as is perfectly exemplified by *day* and *night*, *summer* and *winter*, the fluctuations of the *tide*, the *revolutions of the heavenly bodies*, &c. There is another meaning, less proper however, when by *vicissitude* we intend *change* simply. But *earthquakes* and *volcanoes*, and *inundations*, are not *vicissitudes*, according to any licenced usage of language. It would be as proper to call the conspiracy of Cataline, or the gun-powder plot, by that name. As to *peculiar catastrophes*, perhaps it becomes us not to decide whether they are *vicissitudes* or not, till we are better informed what is intended by them. For the present we are in Egyptian darkness on the subject. The reader's attention would not have been detained by a verbal criticism, were it not to show the total emptiness of the man's mind, who wrote this passage. He either knew not, or did not at all consider, the plain meaning of the words which he used.

But let us pass on to the contemplation of the wonderful conjecture, which is contained in the passage last cited; viz. "that earthquakes, &c. may have had some influence on the production of this *secret of nature.*" It is sufficient to exhibit the extreme futility of such a conjecture, merely to mention, that there is no conceivable connexion between earthquakes, &c. and the state of the human body, or the human mind. But we need not

rest here. It is very far from being proved, and, we apprehend, from being capable of proof, that this continent is more exposed to *earthquakes*, *volcanoes*, or *inundations* than the eastern continent, which is so complacently said to be in the "calm of the elements." As to *peculiar catastrophes*, we again beg to be excused from saying any thing about them. One would think, that *earthquakes* were not so strange events even in England, as the writer of this article would lead us to suppose. Pray, Messrs. Cyclopœdists, how many times have the people of London spent their nights in the fields, through fear that their houses would be tumbled upon their heads by an earthquake? Out of twenty-six great earthquakes recorded to have taken place within less than three centuries past, twenty have spent their force on the Eastern continent. Only one was felt in both continents, and that was in 1692, when Port Royal was destroyed with three thousand inhabitants, and one hundred thousand people perished in England, France, and Germany. Ask Lisbon, Naples, and the adjacent country, and the island of Sicily, whether they are situated in the "calm of the elements?" How often have Nicomedia, Antioch, and Constantinople, been either wholly, or in part, laid in ruins by earthquakes? This direful calamity at one time laid waste one hundred and fifty cities, in Europe and Asia; at another, in 745, no fewer than five hundred cities of Asia, were laid in ruins, or greatly injured; and no computation could be made of the loss of human life. Did not these people live in the "calm of the elements?" As to *volcanoes*, Herculaneum, and Pompeia, are, we trust, competent witnesses to prove, that volumes of fire and smoke, and rivers of burning lava, have been known and dreaded even in Europe. We might make similar remarks with respect to *inundations*; but will trouble the reader no longer upon so plain a subject.

The writer proceeds to state, as a fact corroborative of his conjecture, that "it is well known at present, that the most violent shocks of earthquakes, which are sometimes felt throughout the whole extent of the new continent, communicate no succession" (delectable word!) "at all to ours." In the first place, we are not able to find, that there ever was an earthquake felt throughout the whole extent of the American continent. In the next place, if there were, and if it did not communicate any *succession* to the eastern continent, what does all this prove? We may retort upon them, that their most violent earthquakes have communicated no "*succession*" to our continent. But let us attend to the wonderful fact, and still more wonderful reasoning which follows.

"Had it not been for private advices received from different parts, those in Europe would never have known, that on the 4th of April, 1768, the whole tract of America was shaken: whence we may infer, that anciently dreadful calamities may have happened whereof the inhabitants of that hemisphere, so far from feeling them, have not had the slightest intimation."

The writer meant no more in the first part of this sentence,

notwithstanding his parade of "private advices" &c. than to say, that an earthquake which shook the whole continent of America was not felt in Europe. Not to spend any time upon verbal criticism, we doubt the fact, whether there was such an earthquake, as is here described, in the year 1768. We can find no printed account of any earthquake in that year, nor can the old men to whom we have applied inform us of any. Mr. Webster, whose researches on that subject have been as extensive, as those of any man within our knowledge, mentions none on this continent, though he tells us of one by which Bagdad, situated "in the calm of the elements," was overthrown and nearly destroyed. But admitting the writer's fact, what does it conduce to his argument? If the earthquakes of one continent are not felt on the other, how does this prove, that the people of America are inferior to their brethren in the eastern world?

What the writer can mean by his inference in the latter part of the sentence, which we have been considering, we confess ourselves unable to decipher. Whether this is owing to our stupidity, or not, we may be confident that it can have no possible meaning relative to the subject under discussion. The writer sat out by attempting to account for the supposed inferiority of Americans; and in the prosecution of this design has proceeded to infer, "that anciently dreadful calamities may have happened whereof the inhabitants of that *hemisphere* (what hemisphere, is meant we know not) so far from feeling them, have not had the slightest intimation." Wonderful conclusion! But the writer proceeds:

"Neither should we, following the example of some of the learned, apply to the new world the prodigies found in the Timæus and the Critias of Plato, concerning the Atlantis sunk by a torrent of rain that lasted only four and twenty hours. The basis of this tradition was brought from Egypt, &c. &c. &c."

Thus goes on this pedantic rhapsody, growing more and more senseless, if possible, through two paragraphs. It talks of "anachronisms, cataclysms, Hercules, Orpheus, and the Argonauts," and many other things, which have no more relation to the subject, than has Robinson Crusoe, or Gulliver's Travels.

The opinion that America was settled from Kamschatka, is next attacked; but as no reasons are offered in support of that attack, either new or important, the reader will not be troubled with any quotations or remarks.

To give some notion of the barbarous dialect in which this part of the article is written, it is sufficient to cite only a few expressions as specimens. Instead of being told that certain species of animals are become extinct, we are informed "they have been annihilated." To the ordinary terms of Natural History, the words "frugivorous, sarcophagous, and zoophagous" have been added. For perspiration we here read "transpirtion;" and for simple *parched corn*, our ears are delighted with "torrefied maize."

Among many other strange assertions, we find it stated that the natives, dispersed towards the

centre of the continent, had not the slightest knowledge of salt. The man who does not know, that salt-licks and salt springs, are interspersed throughout the interior of North America, so far as the country has been explored, to say nothing of the newly *discovered salt mountain*, is indeed ignorant, and but ill qualified to give a description of this continent.

Allowed and habitual incest among the aboriginal Americans is alleged as another cause of their inferiority; but as the writer does not find any authority, which he is willing to rely upon in support of so monstrous a fact, and as persons of information know full well, that no such fact exists, we merely mention the charge, and pass on.

One curious characteristic in some of the petty tribes is, according to the Cyclopædist, that they were "*sunk in a total ignorance of all that constitutes the rational animal;*" a phraseology which none but a French philosopher could have invented, and none but a slavish imitator adopted.

The American editors, after recapitulating the principal arguments on the subject of the inferiority, which we have so often had occasion to mention, and enumerating some facts, which shew the futility of these arguments, very properly subjoin; "Had these facts been known, and duly weighed, much of the foregoing matter might have been spared, which contains the most absurd inferences, drawn from the most groundless surmises."

It is assumed by the Cyclopædist, that the animals of America are smaller than those of the same kinds in Europe, and that cattle imported here always degenerate; both of which assumptions Mr. Jefferson, in his Notes on Virginia, has proved to be false.

The American editors have shewn, from the memoir of a European traveller, that America is greatly superior to Europe in the productions of the forest. The following are some of the comparisons.

"In Europe there are thirty-seven trees, which grow to the height of thirty feet; of which eighteen form the mass of their forests, and sixteen are found in every part of Europe. In America there are ninety species of trees, which exceed forty feet in height. They are all natives of the forest, and seventy-two are common to all parts of the United States. In Europe only seven are fit for architecture, in America no less than fifty-one."

The opinion that there are in America several tribes of cannibals is controverted by the American editor, who says,

"That among many of those tribes hitherto supposed to be addicted to this practice, where the matter has been enquired into, by persons on whose judgment we could rely, the natives have almost universally expressed the utmost horror and aversion at the idea."

The Cyclopædist speaks with much contempt of the exertions of missionaries among the Indians of America. He observes, that "the Indians of the missions have nothing to do with the subject;" (viz. literature;) "since all concurs to show that they are rather converted into fanatical slaves, than reduced to a state of humanity."

It has been very fashionable among a set of would-be philos-

ophers, of late years, to extol the efficacy of literature in civilizing men. They indulge in the most romantic dreams, in the most fanciful and unsupported theories on this subject. They seem to think that science has a mysterious power of transforming the savage into a humane, polite, industrious, enterprising, liberal, candid, judicious, rational—philosopher; and all this nobody knows when, and nobody knows how, and nobody knows where. And science *will* accomplish this when monkies shall, according to lord Monboddo, leave off their tails through politeness, and become wise and politic nations, well furnished with generals and legislators, possessed of arts and arms, and above all instructed by *philosophers;* and *this* will be done, when chemists shall be able to *crystallize* a man, as Dr. Ewell thinks they may, at some future period of improvement. The fact is, literature alone never did, and never will reform and civilize savage nations. But blessed be God, there is a power which *can* reform the vicious life, and awaken to feeling and to virtuous exercise the callous affections of the wandering Indian. When this is done, he will choose a fixed habitation, and an industrious life; and will, from a sense of duty, exert himself to procure a useful education for his children. The power I speak of is Christianity, applied to the heart, and consequently practised in the life It was this which civilized the inhabitants of Britain, and of many other parts of Europe, many hundred years ago; it was this which produced in New-England such blessed effects from the labors of Eliot and the Mayhews, and of those who have followed their example, animated by the same spirit. These are the men whose labors are sneered at; men who have done more in a few years for the comfort and happiness of savages, than would ever be done by philosophers, were they as numerous as the locusts, which darkened the land of Egypt.

As a specimen of the accuracy displayed in this important article, take the following sentence. "The earthquake that was felt in Canada in 1663, overturned a chain of freestone mountains upwards of three hundred miles in length, converting the whole of that immense tract into one entire plain." No comment is necessary even to a child.

After stating the arguments of Dr. Robertson, and the Abbe Clavigero with respect to the original settlement of America, the writer concludes all he has to say on this article, except some loose details, which he subjoins under the head of *Geography.* We confess ourselves unable to express to our readers, in an adequate manner, our opinion of the extreme dearth of information, and ignorance of all that relates to the subject, displayed through these barren pages. We are much surprised that Dr. Rees should have admitted into a work of so much merit, as his Cyclopædia certainly possesses, an article so miserably written, as to the style, method, and reasoning. Would it not take up too much room, sufficient extracts should be given to convince our readers, if they are not already convinced, that these things are not light-

ly said. The style is verbose, inflated, and unconnected; in its sudden transitions from one subject to another often resembling the conversation of a delirious man. We have counted twelve subjects in one sentence, and eight in another. There is no such thing as perspicuity, precision, or purity, from beginning to end. Where facts are stated, no authority is referred to: and the facts introduced are of the most general kind, containing nothing particular, or discriminating. The object of the writer, and his only object, seems to be to tell his readers what a stupid, lazy, cowardly, cruel set of beings the aboriginal Americans are: and how prone Europeans emigrating to America are to degenerate, and become like their savage neighbors.

We wish not to enter the lists of controversy with the writer on the subject of the natives of our forests. They are bad enough, as are all savages. Those who know any thing about them, know, however, that they are capable of long and arduous exertion; that they are habituated to great hardships and privations; that they possess great cunning and undaunted resolution; that they often persist in their designs with unconquerable perseverance; and that they display, at times, a Spartan bravery in the field, and, in the cabinet, much deliberative wisdom, and much animating and sublime eloquence. Many tribes are not incapable of generous hospitality, and ardent friendship.

A reader falling upon the article America, in a Cyclopœdia, would naturally expect a clear, and regular account of the discovery of this continent; of the manners, habits, virtues and vices of the inhabitants; of the climate, soil, and productions; of the rivers, lakes, mountains, forests, and surrounding waters; of the medicinal, mineral, and animal kingdoms; of the progress of settlement by immigration; and of the wealth, population, resources, government, arts and sciences, manufactures, agriculture and commerce of the nations, formed by natural increase from small beginnings. Nor would he expect the religious and moral state of society to be passed over and neglected. Yet whoever should expect a satisfactory account on any one of these points would be sadly disappointed.

That the people of Europe should depend upon such sources of information is to be deeply lamented. When they see a description of a whole continent ushered with imposing gravity into a magnificent quarto, they naturally look for accuracy of fact, however they may be insulted by puerile reasoning, and pedantry of style. But it is seldom they receive, what is very easy to be given, faithful narration.

The American Editors have corrected many errors, pointed out many blunders, exposed much silly reasoning, and much despicable conjecture. We cannot but say, however, that they have left the article too imperfect, and that they have treated it, as it came from England, with too much respect, though they confess that they "might have been justified in rejecting the whole." For ourselves, were the whole work of Dr. Rees as faulty as this article, we should

be decidedly of opinon, that it ought to be burnt, rather than read. We are glad that this is not the fact, but that the labors before us, taken all in all, are perhaps as worthy of patronage, as any of the kind that have ever been performed.

(To be continued.)

RELIGIOUS INTELLIGENCE.

AMERICA.

The ocean is composed of drops, and the universe of atoms.

CENT SOCIETY.

It must be particularly interesting to the friends of Zion, to notice in how many streams the affectionate regards and zealous exertions of the disciples of Christ are flowing, to accomplish the gracious purposes of him, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working. The christian world, after many years of apparent slumber, has been roused to activity, which may be considered as a favorable omen, that the set time to favor Zion approaches, while the hearts of the wealthy have been opened cheerfully to defray the expenses attending the execution of enlarged plans of christian philanthropy, in the dissemination of divine truth. The female disciples of the Lord, encouraged by their master's gracious acceptance of the widow's mite, have associated to aid in accomplishing the benevolent object.

The Cent Society consists of females, who engage to pay one cent a week for the purpose of purchasing Bibles, Watts' psalms and hymns, primers, catechisms, divine songs, &c. to be dispersed by the Massachusetts Missionary Society among the poor in the new settlements, and other places where few means are enjoyed for attaining the knowledge of the truth. Though the sum to be paid by each individual be inconsiderable, yet the remarkable success with which the plan has been crowned demonstrates, that it is not to be despised. This institution commenced in 1802, and the sum which has been collected exceeds two thousand dollars.

It is confidently hoped that this very eligible mode of aiding in the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom, which is within the compass of almost every person's abilities, will be more generally adopted, and continue to be a fruitful source to aid missionary societies in the great cause in which they are embarked. If benevolent individuals in each town or parish would undertake to procure subscribers, and collect the money, they might be the means of effectually promoting the cause of truth.

Any information relative to the institution will be communicated by application to Deacon John Simpkins, treasurer of the Massachusetts Missionary Society.

The amouut collected by the Cent Society, from May, 1807, to May, 1808, and a particular account of its expenditure will be given hereafter.

Maryville, May 16th, 1808.

REV. SIR,

After a longdelay, occasioned by the great pressure of business, I resume the historical sketches I had promised.—I estabilshed my second school in the lower district of the nation. The nation is composed of seven different families or clans, as they are called; but more generally distinguished by the upper and lower towns. It was placed under the patronage of a white man, who had married a native, by whom he had a considerable family, composing part of the school. With him the master boarded. The teacher was a man of distinguished piety, and considerable information. I therefore designed him to act the part of an exhorter in the nation; an order of men I think known in the

days of the apostles. The case was laid before the presbytery of Union, of which I am a member, and he obtained a special licence for that purpose. As far as I am able to judge, he possessed a true missionary spirit, and engaged with all his heart in the work. In the course of a few months, singing and praying became so common about the school and amongst the blacks and half breeds in the neighborhood, that it began to harrow up the conscience of this white man, who being very subject to intoxication, and many other bad habits, could not bear that his children and servants should be ruined, as he called it, by religion. He made a most violent opposition to the whole business, though once its warmest friend; drove the master from his house, and made it necessary to remove the school from his neighborhood. Though he meant it for evil, God meant it for good, and found for the institution a temporary asylum, in the bosom of a half breed, where it continued under pretty advantageous circumstances for the space of a year and eight months, until providence again opened the door for its station near the neighborhood of its first establishment. At this temporary station at Sale creek, when driven from Chikamaga, it had the advantage of being near the new garrison, there recruiting, about eight miles distant, while thus in its infancy it could be guarded from insult until the merits of the undertaking should recommend the design to the minds of the Indians. As the boundary line between the white and red people was then about being fixed, we had the pleasure of many gentlemen of respectability and literature calling on us, and thus not only encouraging our pupils, but raising a respect for the institution, in the bosoms of the principal chiefs of the nations, who were present at the running of the line; and when these gentlemen returned home they, by their representations, encreased the prayers of the pious in their neighborhoods for our success.

From none however did we receive more marked attention, than from Colonel Meigs, agent of the United States, whose fatherly care and evident interest in the welfare of the institution, left a lasting impression on the minds of both the teacher and the children of the school.

Two letters from Colonel Meigs, one addressed to the public, bearing date September 8, 1806, and the other to myself, September 25th, 1807, will give you his view of the practicability and progress of educating the Indians.

CIRCULAR.

September 8th, 1806.

"In the year 1803, the Rev. Gideon Blackburn obtained from the President of the United States, the superintendence of education in the Cherokee nation, and at the same time received a donation of 250 dollars, and in 1804 and 5 received a further donation of 350 dollars from the government; this I believe is all he has received from the government. In the beginning of 1804 a school commenced on the Highwassee River of from fifteen to twenty children. The expense of paying a good instructor, of victualling and clothing the children, has been wholly defrayed by his exertions, from the commencement of the school to the present time, and has now increased to seventy-five scholars, in two schools, and the instruction requires three schoolmasters. The proficiency of the scholars has exceeded every expectation. The Cherokees are now so strongly impressed with the estimation of the value of the institution, that they are pressing him to receive more children. His means of carrying on this benevolent work, lie in the hearts and hands of the benevolent and liberally disposed. The consideration of raising up a long lost people, and placing them on the footing of men; snatching them from ruin, to which they seemed fast approaching, and making them a valuable part of our extensive population, has raised him up many friends and well wishers in his laborious work.

When the plan of education is examined (and no other could succeed) it will be seen that it requires very considerable pecuniary aid; but when the magnitude of the object is taken into consideration; it is presumed

that his hands and his heart will find encouragement from all the well wishers to the improvement of those people, whose circumstances will justify their liberality.

RETURN J. MEIGS.

HIGH WASSEE.

September 25th, 1807.

DEAR SIR,

ON my return from the boundary line, on the waters of Elk river, I called on Mr. Dinnon, who was employed in instructing his little charge of Cherokees. I had not been at the school for near a year. I was therefore able to estimate the proficiency since my last visit. I heard them read,—saw their writing and books of arithmetic, and heard them sing sundry hymns. If, Sir, you can call to mind the feelings you have sometimes had, when from pleasing sensations tears attempt to escape, and through pride you have endeavored to suppress them; then you are able to realise my feelings on looking at the little Cherokees with books in hand, intelligence sparkling in their eyes, with real character depicted in their faces. An association of ideas rush upon the mind inexpressible. We look back! We look forward! We look back to the time when all was darkness. We look forward when all shall be light. The diffusion of knowledge among the children of your schools will multiply in arithmetical progression; and when the wilderness will indeed blossom like the rose.

Mr. Dinnon's ingenuity, industry and perseverance exceed those of any man I ever knew placed in such solitary and cheerless abodes. His prospect of remuneration could yield him little encouragement. His excitement must have originated from another quarter, a confidence of rendering much good to his fellow men.

I know, Sir, you estimate the worth of his ingenuity and perseverance, in the work under your superintendance. He is really doing honor to your institution, and deserves as much reward, as you can possibly give him. My own observation has enabled me to make these remarks in his favor. It is my opinion, that out of one hundred teachers, you cannot find *two*, who would be willing, or perhaps able, to give the uncommon attention he has done to the hard and trying business of instructing the ignorant savages; in leading their minds from barbarism to the mild and gentle principles of christianity.

I am, &c.

RETURN J. MEIGS."

THE progress of the children in both my schools, has fully convinced me, that genius is not confined to the colour of the skin, were equal advantages offered, and it is for a lamentation that so many, who are capable of shining in the circle of a Bacon or Newton should lie neglected in the smoaky huts of the wilderness:

I am, &c.

GIDEON BLACKBURN.

FOREIGN.

OTAHEITE.

INFORMATION respecting the state of the mission at OTAHEITE has lately been received; which is of a more pleasing and hopeful kind than any that has reached the directors for a long time past. This was communicated, not to the society itself, but to Mr. Crook, at Paramatta, in New South Wales, by a letter from Mr. John Davies, one of the missionaries at Otaheite, dated December 26, 1806; which letter Mr. Crook has forwarded to Mr. Warner, father of the missionary who last went out to the South Seas.

By this letter, it appears that the small sloop, the Hawkesbury, which sailed from Port Jackson in September, 1806, on purpose to convey those letters and supplies which had long lain there for the use of the missionaries, arrived at Otaheite November 28.

The renewal of correspondence with the society, after a tedious interval of about six years, afforded them a degree of satisfaction more easily to be conceived than described. The vessel staid at Otaheite about a month, and then returned to Port Jackson; but the directors have received no letter by it of later date than August 8, 1806. Letters, however, may have been forwarded, which are not yet come to hand.

In the letter last mentioned, written three months before the arrival of the Hawkesbury, the missionaries express themselves as much dejected by the want of success, and by not hearing from home for so very long a time. Mr. Jefferson was in a very infirm state, and not expected to recover; Mrs. Eyre was laboring under the infirmities of advanced years; Mrs. Henry also had been seriously indisposed; Mr. and Mrs. Shelly had given up the mission and retired to Port Jackson. They enjoyed however perfect peace with the natives. Pomarre (formerly called Otoo) retained his authority, and was kind and generous towards them. They justly concluded, that the directors could not have forgotten them; and supposed that supplies were then lying at Port Jackson for them, which could not be forwarded.

Their anxieties were happily relieved by the arrival of the Hawkesbury, in November, 1806, with a variety of articles which they needed; and with what was still more welcome to them the long, long-expected letters of their friends and of the directors.

From Mr. Davies' letter to Mr. Crook, we make the following extracts:—"It would be pleasing to send you some good news concerning the state of this mission; but, hitherto, I have had little of that nature to communicate;"...."but, great as our discouragements are, there is no cause of despair. The mission, on the whole, wears a more promising aspect, than at any former period. Public preaching and catechising have been the means of spreading much knowledge of revealed truth in this and the neighboring island, Eimeo: and though we cannot say that we have positive evidence of the conversion of any, yet I could name two young men, who died not long ago in this district, who gave, probably, as good evidence of conversion, as those two Taheitans, mentioned in the Evangelical Magazine, as converted and baptized by the brethren, at their school in Yorkshire.

"All the Society Islands enjoy profound peace; and there is a probability of its continuance. The authority of Pomarre as a king, is acknowledged not only at Taheite, Eimeo, Metea, and Teturoa, but also by Raeatea, Huaheene, Mocao Manu, Borabora, and at Matea (which I suppose to be the Recreation Island of Roggewin;) and also by some of the Pearl Islands. Notwithstanding this general peace, however, it appears that a few weeks ago, there was a bloody war at Oura; where the party that conquered, baked in the oven, and ate up the other!

"The authority of Pomarre being acknowledged in the adjacent islands, is a very favorable circumstance, should a mission be sent to any of them.—Pomarre has learned to read and write his native tongue; he also knows a little English. His example has had a very good effect on others, who express a desire for the same attainments. Pomarre is now writing a letter to the directors, in answer to that which they addressed to him; so that he understands its contents very well."

From the letter, which we translated for him, dated August 8, 1806, we add the following account: "As he *has* entered our dwelling, he is mostly, during the day-time, in one or another of our apartments, amusing himself with writing, in which he has made considerable progress; and frequently writes to us in his own language with much readiness.

"Pomarre has promised to banish Oro [his chief idol] to Raeatea; and to abolish human sacrifices and infant murders!—but, I suppose, it is all *te vaha* (mere talk) as the Taheitans say. However, he appears sincere in his attachment to us; and treats us with much kindness.

"We greatly wish to see a few families coming out to us. We have no desire to quit our post; at least I can sincerely say so as to myself. I trust I am in the path of duty. I shall be very glad to see Mr. Warner (who had not then arrived.) As to myself and family, I shall be heartily glad to see you joining us; it would be a great aquisition to the mission.

"I shall only add, that I have lately made another trial towards opening a school for the instruction of the youth; and am glad to say, that there is a good prospect of success: This is more than I could ever say before,

although I have made repeated trials. We have at last adopted a new alphabet, which we now send home; together with a Grammar, Vocabulary, Catechism, &c. JOHN DAVIES."

This intelligence we cannot but consider as, upon the whole, encouraging. The intimacy and apparent cordiality subsisting between the king and the missionaries, with the evident tendency of his example to promote civilization among the people, augurs well. The patient perseverance of the missionaries, who have continued on the island so many years amidst so many discouragements, deserves the highest praise; and we cannot but hope, that the Lord will at length, crown their faithful labors with success! Evan. Mag.

OBITUARY.

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT TO DR. SHIPPEN.

AMONG the recent deaths at Philadelphia and its vicinity is to be found that of WILLIAM SHIPPEN, M. D. Professor of Anatomy and Midwifery in the University of Pennsylvania, aged seventy-five. The life of this man has been so intimately connected with the medical history of our country, that his death deserves more than an ordinary obituary notice, in a common newspaper. Dr. Shippen may with propriety be called the Founder of the medical school at Philadelphia.

A recital of the hardships sustained by the first settlers of a country, in the conversion of its wilds into fruitful farms and flourishing villages, ever animates their descendants to persevere in the progressive road of improvement; likewise an account of the toil and difficulties encountered by the founders of our schools of medicine, in reducing to a regular science a mass of undigested facts, and in unfolding the structure and economy of physical man, should not fail to animate their successors in carrying on, and improving establishments, thus devoted to the promotion of a knowledge of the science of humanity.

Dr. Shippen, after finishing his term of medical pupilage, which was begun at Philadelphia, and completed in Europe, commenced a course of public lectures upon anatomy at Philadelphia. The infant institution at first struggled with many difficulties; but has so far grown in reputation from these small beginnings, that it has already become a rival to the celebrated medical school at Edinburgh. Dr. S. lived to see the school divided into five branches, all of which aresupplied with able professors. He likewise saw its connexion with a large hospital, which has a well chosen and extensive medical library, appropriated to the use of the hospital students. During his life, the term of public instruction has been lengthened to four months, the lectures commencing the first of November, and terminating the first of March following. In the year 1806, a new and commodious anatomical theatre was erected at Philadelphia. Introductory to the first lecture given in this edifice, Dr. Shippen made an address to his class of pupils, the substance of which follows:

"Gentlemen, I experience a peculiar pleasure in addressing you on the present occasion. In the year 1764, I gave the first lecture upon anatomy ever pronounced in this western world, to but ten pupils. I now address more than two hundred and fifty in my present course of public instruction. A view of the contrast rallies all my feeble remains of animation. I have lived to see this school of medicine grow from small beginnings, ramifying into several branches, all the present professors of which have been my immediate pupils. I now reap full recompense for all the toil and dangers * I have pass-

* Dr. S. has been several times

ed in founding and prosecuting so important, but at the same time so unpopular, a branch of instruction as anatomy.

"The infirmities of age admonish me to retire. It is with much satisfaction I can now resign my public duties as professor to my able colleague Dr. Wistar, whose zeal in discharging the duties of our office, is to be equalled only by their importance to the lives and health of mankind."

After he had finished this short address, the whole class rose to testify their respect to him for the good he had done, and in approbation of what he had said. They bowed to him the respectful farewell of prayerful intercession for the happy continuance, and placid termination of his days. He then withdrew to make room for Dr. Wistar, who soon nailed the attention of the class to the usual subjects in the order of instruction.

Of the character and talents of the deceased, the writer feels himself too little acquainted to speak of them with confidence. The most prominent traits discovered in the few lectures which he gave when he was in the seventy-fourth year of his age, were judgment in selecting what was immediately applicable in elucidating the principles and practice of surgery, plainness in the mode of communicating his thoughts, and a fruitful vein of humor, which he occasionally employed to awaken the attention of his audience to the subject matter in discussion.

The professional talents of Dr. Shippen must have been held in very high estimation, as he had the appointment of director-general of the medical department in the army of the United States before the close of the late Revolutionary War. He discharged the duties of the office with equal honor to himself, and satisfaction to all concerned in the department.

The physicians of our country cannot bestow too much applause on the memory of the deceased, when they view him in the light of Father of the Medical School at Philadelphia; a school, where genius and labor furnish a product, which as much honors its professors, as it enriches the intellects of its students; a school where the tyro is animated with an ardor which makes him forget every idea of labor, while he treads with determined step the rounds of medical instruction; a school, where not only what has been, but what remains to be investigated, is pointed out with clearness, together with the most probable means of solving *desiderata* by a series of experiments: a school where a zeal for promoting a knowledge of the natural * history of our country is to be measured only by its great extent, and unparalleled growth in culture and population; in a a word, a school, which exercises at control talents,† that have commanded tribute even from royalty.

---

obliged, during the exercise of his public duties as professor, to desert his own dwelling, and conceal himself in some unsuspected place, that he might avoid paying his life in tribute to the tyrannical exactions of a mob.

* Dr. Barton, professor of Materia Medica, Botany, and Natural History has awakened such a spirit of investigation, in the culture of natural science, as promises an extensive collection of facts in natural history; which in the hands of the learned and indefatigable professor must, at some future period, form a well arranged system of natural science, worthy of our fruitful soil and inexhaustible minerals.

† Dr. Rush, Professor of Institutes and Practice of Medicine and of Clinical practice, has been presented with two gold medals, one by the King of Prussia, and the other by the Queen of Etruria, in expression of their sense of his distinguished worth.

ORDINATION.

ORDINATION.

ON Thursday, the 30th June last, was ordained over the united congregations of Springfield and Fair-view, (Erie county, state of Pennsylvania,) Rev. Johnston Eaton. The exercises were performed in the following order. Rev. Robert Johnston from Venango county, made the introductory prayer and preached the sermon from 2 Cor. xii. chap. and part of the 14th ver. "for I seek not yours, but you." Rev Joseph Stockson of Crauford county, presided and gave the charge; Rev. Cyrus Riggs from Mercer county, made the concluding prayer. The exercises were appropriate and impressive, the assemblage was large and respectable, and all things conducted decently and in order.

POETRY.

INSCRIPTION

IN A GROTTO CONTAINING THE BUSTS OF ILLUSTRIOUS HEROES.

Crown'd with immortal wreaths of well-earn'd fame,
In native splendor Albion's heroes shine;
A thankful nation hails their boasted name,
And twining laurels deck their brilliant shrine.
But say, cherubic train! whose flame-wing'd quire
Fill with ecstatic lays the vocal sky,
Are these the race whom heaven's Almighty Sire,
Views with peculiar smile and fav'ring eye!—
Go: to yon moss-clad roof direct thy feet:—
There shall thine eyes a nobler hero view;—
See suppliant Faith infernal pow'rs defeat,
And heav'nly Grace Corruption's might subdue;
This lowly Conqueror of Himself survey,
And ah! how mean is Grandeur's dazzling ray!

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Memoirs of Rev. Jonathan Burr, shall appear in our next number.

We are pleased with the Juvenile lines on Spring. Our respected correspondent who communicated them, will excuse our postponing their publication till next May, when he recollects, that "every thing is beautiful in its season." We thank him for the lines uttered by "The dying Mary Anne." Their tenderness and piety, rather than their poetry, entitle them to a place in our work.

We have received reviews of "Hymns for public worship, for the use of the church in Brattle Street."—And of "A Religious Conference, &c. By a Layman" which shall appear in due season.

N. E.'s dialogue is received and under consideration.

The "biographical sketches of Mrs. Abigail Nelson," display the character and religious experience of an eminently pious woman. We think they would form a useful pamphlet. They are too long for our work; and we apprehend an abridgment would not meet the wishes of the author, or of the other friends of Mrs. N.